The BRIDE'S FATE

·BY·MRS·

SOUTHWORTH

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SEQUEL TO

"The Changed Brides"

BY

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"Self-Raised," etc., etc., etc.

GROSSET & DUNLAP
PUBLISHERS : NEW YORK

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1900z

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THE BRIDE'S FATE

CHAPTER I.

UNCHANGING LOVE.

" Kind friends may be to thee,
But love like hers thou'lt see,
Never again."

REST, peace, love, comfort were now Drusilla's portions. It was a new experience to the poor, discarded, and deposed young wife to find herself the central object of interest in a family like General Lyon's, her health and happiness watched over and provided for with the most affectionate solicitude.

She had not a care in the world. She scarcely had a regret. She knew the worst. She knew that her last act had banished Alexander from her side. But when she looked upon her boy's face, and reflected that no stigma now rested upon his baby brow, she could not regret her act. With the child-like simplicity of her character, she "accepted the situation."

In the sunshine of this sweet old home, her heart expanded to all kindly sympathies.

She—the orphan girl, who had never been blessed by a father's tender care, deeply responded to the affection bestowed on her by old General Lyon, and really doted on the fine veteran. At his desire she called him uncle; but she loved him as a father. She would watch and listen for his footsteps, in his daily visit to her sick room; and she would kiss and fondle his aged hands and then lift up her boy to receive his blessing.

And often on these occasions the veteran's eyes filled with tears, as he glanced from the childish mother to the child, and murmured:

"Poor children! poor children! while I live you shall be my children."

Anna was not less kind than her grandfather to Drusilla.

And she, the only daughter, who had never before known a sister's companionship, loved Miss Lyon with a sister's love, and delighted in her cheerful society.

She felt friendly towards Dick, and was very fond of the attentive old servants. Indeed, her loving, sunny spirit went out on all around her.

But her greatest joy was in her child. She would soothe him to sleep with the softest, sweetest notes, and after laying him in his cradle, she would kneel and gaze on his sleeping face for hours.

Mammy protested against this idolatry; but Drusilla answered her:

"It is not idolatry, nurse; because I do not place the gift before the Giver. There is not an instant in my life that I am not conscious of fervent gratitude to the Lord for giving me this child, a gift forever and ever; a gift for time and eternity; oh, nurse, a gift, of which nothing on earth or in Heaven can deprive me!"

"Don't say that, ma'am; the Lord might take the child," said mammy, solemnly.

"I know that, nurse. The Lord might take him to Heaven, to save him from the evil in this world; but he would be safe there, for the Lord would take care of him for me, and give him back to me when I myself should reach the Blessed Land," she answered, reverently.

And mammy had nothing more to say.

How closely the young mother watched the tiny growth of her child, and the faint development of his intelligence. She could see progress where no one else could perceive the slightest sign of it. She discovered that "he" "took notice," long before any one could be brought to acknowledge that such a prodigy was possible. Her delight when her boy first smiled in his sleep, or when she fancied he did, was something almost ludicrous. She was kneeling by his cradle, watching his slumbers as usual, when she suddenly cried out, though in a hushed voice:

"Oh, Anna! Cousin Anna! look! look! he is laughing, he is indeed! *See* how he is laughing!"

Miss Lyon came and bent over the cradle. So did mammy, who drew back again, saying:

"Lor! why that ain't no laugh, ma'am; that's wind—leastways, it is a grimace caused by wind on the stomach, and I must give him some catnip when he wakes."

Now, if Drusilla's sweet face had been capable of expressing withering contempt mammy would have been shrivelled up to a mummy: but as it was she could only appeal from the nurse to Miss Lyon.

"Anna, look at him—he *is* laughing, or, at the very least, smiling—is he not?"

"Yes, my darling, he is certainly smiling; and you know the old folks say when an infant smiles in its sleep it dreams of Heaven and sees angels."

"And I do believe that is true—it must be true! And my little cherub sees his guardian angels!" exclaimed Drusilla, delightedly.

"I tell you, ma'am," began mammy, "it is nothing but jest win—Owtch!" she exclaimed, suddenly breaking off as Anna trod heavily upon her corns."

And presently mammy limped off to make the threatened catnip tea, leaving the two young women to the enjoyment of their faith in the sleeping baby's Heavenly visions.

For the first weeks infants' eyes are of no particular form, color or expression, but merely little liquid orbs folded up in fat. But very soon Drusilla made very great discoveries in her infant's eyes. Sitting alone one morning, and gazing down upon the babe that lay smiling on her lap, she murmured:

"Oh, Alick, Alick, dear, you have torn yourself away from me, and have gone. But you could not deprive me of your *eyes*, my Alick! They look up at me from my baby's face, and while they do so I can never cease to love you and pray for you, Alick, my Alick!"

Since his desertion this was the only occasion upon which she had ever breathed his name, and even now it was only in half audible murmurs as she talked to herself, or to her babe.

By the other members of the family, Alexander's name

was never mentioned. General Lyon had given no orders to this effect, but the subject was tacitly dropped by all as one unspeakably painful and humiliating.

General Lyon, who loved the delicate, dove-eyed little woman with a fatherly fondness, would not let her confine herself to her own apartments a day longer than was necessary. He first of all wiled her down to the afternoon tea, and then after a few days coaxed her down to dinner ; and on the Sunday following sent for her to join the family circle at breakfast.

The " family circle " at this time comprised only General Lyon, Anna, Dick, and Drusilla.

Dick had remained at Old Lyon Hall ever since Alexander's exodus, with the exception of one day when he rode over to Hammondville, where he had left the parson and the lawyer to tell them that their services would not be required, and to remunerate and dismiss them.

Since that day Dick had made a clean breast of it to his uncle and had won a conditional consent to his marriage with Anna ; the engagement being encumbered with a probation of one year.

" I shall be an old maid yet if I live long enough," said Anna, laughing when she heard from Dick of this decision. " My marriage day has been fixed and my marriage interrupted three times ! and at every interruption it has been deferred for one year, only to be interrupted again at the end of it."

" I don't complain of all other interruptions, but Anna, let us make sure of a marriage this time by going off by ourselves and getting it done," said Anna's lover.

" For shame, Dick," was all the answer she vouchsafed him.

" We are of age," urged her suitor.

" So much the worse, sir, for we should know better," said Anna.

And Dick ceased to push the question.

It drew near the Christmas holidays, and the weather was very fine for the season.

General Lyon invited and pressed his adopted niece to take drives in the picturesque vicinity of the hall.

But Drusilla answered that she wished her first going

out should be to the house of God, in acknowledgment of His great mercy in preserving her and her child amid so many dangers, and raising up to them such dear friends.

And the conscientious old soldier could urge the matter no farther.

One Friday morning Anna and Drusilla were seated together as usual—the baby sleeping in the cradle between them—when Anna said:

"Drusilla, my dear, you are going to church next Sunday?"

"Yes, I am; Providence permitting, Anna."

"Do you know it will be Christening Sunday?"

"No, I didn't, Anna."

"Well, it will be. Now wouldn't you like to have your boy christened?"

"Oh, yes; indeed I should, bless him!"

"And I will be his godmother, and grandpa and Dick shall be his godfathers. You know, being a boy, he will require two godfathers and one godmother. If he were a girl, the matter would be reversed. Now what do you say, my dear?"

"I thank you very much, dear Anna, for your kindness in thinking of all this. And I shall be very grateful to you and dear uncle and cousin Dick for becoming sponsors for my darling boy," said Drusilla, earnestly.

"And the christening is to go on?"

"Certainly, dear Anna, if you please."

"What name will you give your child?"

"If dear uncle consents I should like to name my boy for him—'Leonard.'"

"And not Alick?" inquired Anna.

It was the first time for weeks past that she had uttered his name; and she did it now in a sort of triumph in the thought that his discarded wife had ceased to care for him.

"And not Alick?" she repeated, seeing that Drusilla hesitated to answer.

"No, not Alick," the young mother now replied, calmly and gravely.

"That is right; I am glad of it! Very glad of it!" exclaimed Anna, with such righteous indignation and

exultation combined that the young wife looked at her in surprise and sorrow.

"I think you mistake me, dear cousin," she said. "The only reason why I do not call my child after his father is this:—I have already *one* Alick, *but* one Alick and I can never have another. I cannot even bear that my child should have his name. I want but one Alick in the whole world.

"Goodness knows, I think one of that sort would be quite enough!" exclaimed Anna.

Drusilla looked at her in gentle reproach.

"Is it *possible*, child, that you still love that scamp?" scornfully demanded Miss Lyon.

"Oh, Anna dear, yes! He *used* to love me too; he was very kind to me, from the days when I was a poor little sickly, ignorant girl, till within a short time ago. Oh, Anna, shall the madness of a few months make me forget all the loving kindness of many long years? Never, Alick, dear, never," she murmured, dropping her voice as in soliloquy; "I will still love you and pray for you and trust in you—for I know, Alick, dear—*when you come to yourself you will come to me.* I can wait for that time."

Anna gazed on the inspired young face in amazement that gradually gave way to reverence, and even to awe.

"Drusilla," she said, solemnly, "I retract all I ever said against Alexander, and I promise never to open my lips to his prejudice again."

Drusilla looked up gratefully but—inquiringly.

"Your eyes thank me, but you wish to know why I say this. I will tell you: It is because you make me begin to believe in that man. Your faith in him affects me. There *must* be some great reserve of good somewhere latent and undeveloped in his nature, to have drawn forth such a faith as yours. But were he the greatest sinner that ever darkened the earth, such love as yours would make him sacred."

CHAPTER II.

CALM DELIGHTS.

Now has descended a serener hour,
And with reviving fortunes.—SHELLEY.

THE next morning Anna entered Drusilla's room, followed by Matty, bearing a large work-basket filled with cambric white as snow, and lace as fine as cobweb.

"Set it down here at my feet, Matty, and go," said Miss Lyon, sinking into one of the arm-chairs.

Opposite to her sat Drusilla, and between them, of course, lay the sleeping babe in the cradle.

"Here, my dear," said Anna, calling the young mother's attention to the contents of the basket, "I have overhauled all my bureaus and boxes in search of these materials; for you know if our baby is to be christened on Sunday next he must have a fine robe, and you and I must set to work immediately to make it."

"Oh, thanks, dear Anna, for your constant thoughtfulness of me and my babe. I have some very beautifully embroidered robes at Cedar Wood, but nurse did not think it necessary to bring them, and I have none here but very plain white slips," said Drusilla, gratefully.

"Well, now get your scissors ready, for I know nothing about cutting out a baby's robe, so you will have to do that part of the work, but I will seam and tuck and gather and trim with anybody," said Anna, beginning to unroll the snowy cambric.

And Drusilla's nimble fingers soon shaped out the little dress, and the two young women set to work on it with as much delight as ever two little girls took in dressing a doll.

When they had settled the style of the trimming to their mutual satisfaction, and had then worked in silence for some time, Drusilla looked up and said:

"I wonder if dear General Lyon will like to have me name my poor discarded little baby after him?"

"Of course he will. It will be a compliment paid to him—though a well-merited one to him," replied Anna.

"No, dear, it will not be a compliment paid to him, but a favor asked by me, and my heart misgives me that possibly he may not like it."

"Foolish little heart, to have such misgivings! Why don't you set the doubt at rest by asking him and finding out what he will answer?"

"No, no, Anna, I cannot do that, because he is so kind that he would be sure to give me a prompt and cheerful consent, no matter how much secret reluctance he might have to the measure."

"Then if you never propose the matter to him, I don't see how you will accomplish your purpose."

"By *your* means, dear Anna, I hope to do so."

"How by my means, you absurd little thing?"

"I want you to find out in some other delicate way than by direct questioning whether my wish would be agreeable to General Lyon."

"I will try; but I warn you, I am a very bad diplomat."

Whether Miss Lyon was really a bad diplomat or not, she did not seem to think it at all necessary to sound the General on the subject in the manner Drusilla desired; but as she sat with her grandfather in the drawing-room that night, she suddenly said:

"We are going to have our baby christened next Sunday, grandpa, and his mother wants to name him after you."

"Does she, indeed, the dear child? I had not expected such a thing," exclaimed the old man.

"That is, if you have no objection, sir."

"Objection! why I am delighted!"

"I am glad you like the plan."

"Like it? why I have never in my life been more pleased or more surprised! I shall make Master Leonard Lyon a very handsome christening present!"

"That's a darling grandpa! But listen. Don't say a word to Drusilla about the present, beforehand. She is

no more mercenary for her child than she is for herself, and she is the most sensitive person I ever met with in my life."

"All right, Anna! I shall say nothing of the present. But you, my little housekeeper, you must see that a proper christening feast is prepared to do honor to our boy."

"You may safely leave that to me, sir."

The next morning was cold, dark and stormy.

Drusilla was forbidden by her nurse to go down-stairs, and so she had her breakfast up in her own room.

When the service was cleared away, and she was seated before the fire, with the babe in her arms, General Lyon entered the room.

She arose with a countenance beaming with welcome, and was about to lay her babe down, that she might set a chair for her visitor, when he pleasantly signed to her to resume her seat, and he brought one to the fire for himself.

"Anna tells me, my dear, that you design me the honor of naming your fine boy after me," he said, seating himself.

"If you will please to permit me to do so, sir, the honor will be mine, and will make me happy," said Drusilla, blushing deeply.

"My child, I cannot express how much I thank you! how gratified and pleased I feel."

Drusilla looked down, quite overpowered by the fervency of these acknowledgments, on the part of the old hero.

"You must know, my dear," he continued, "I have always secretly longed for another Leonard Lyon to represent me, when I shall be gone; but scarcely had a hope to see one during my life. Leonard Lyon is a very ancient family name with us, and has been kept up in every generation, except the last. It failed there, because I had never been blessed with a son; and my brother had but one, and he was named after the family of his mother, who was a Miss Alexander. Thus, you see, the ancient name, Leonard Lyon, would have become extinct in me, had you not determined to revive and perpetuate it in your son. Heaven bless you for the kind thought, my dear, for it

has made me very happy," said the old gentleman, earnestly.

"I fervently thank Heaven, sir, for giving me the power of pleasing you in this matter," murmured the blushing young mother, in a low and tremulous voice.

"And this I will say, my child, that the name your boy will bear, has never, in the thousand years of its existence, been sullied by a shadow of dishonor."

"I know it has been borne by heroes and sages, and by none others. I hope and pray that my boy will prove worthy of his noble ancestry," fervently breathed Drusilla.

"That, I feel sure, he will! If Heaven should grant me a few more years of life, I shall take great delight in watching the growth of little Leonard Lyon," replied the old gentleman, as he arose, and kissed the mother and the babe, and left the room.

The following Sunday proved to be a very fine day. At an early hour, the capacious family carriage of General Lyon was at the door, well warmed and aired for the reception of the delicate mother and the tender infant.

Not even on her first bridal day, had Drusilla looked so lovely as she did now, when she came down-stairs, dressed for church, her delicate, pale beauty, still more tenderly softened by her simple bonnet of white velvet, and wrappings of white furs.

She was attended by mammy, dressed in her Sunday's best, and carrying the baby, richly arrayed in his christening robes.

General Lyon, Anna, Drusilla, the nurse and the baby rode in the carriage.

Dick Hammond, on horseback, escorted them.

The parish church was at Saulsburg, six, eight, or ten miles off, according to conflicting statements. So, early as they set out, they were not likely to be much too early to join in the commencement of the service.

When they reached the turnpike gate, they found old Andy on duty.

Seeing Dick cantering on in advance of the approaching carriage, he placed himself behind the gate, and lifted up both his arms, while he called aloud to his wife:

"Jenny, woman! come out wi' ye, and tak the toll,

whiles I stand here to keep yon daft laddie frae louping o'er the bar again!"

In answer to the summons, Jenny appeared just in time to receive Mr. Hammond, who quietly drew rein before the door, paid for himself, and the carriage behind him, and then with a bow, rode on his way.

The carriage followed; but as it passed, Mrs. Birney got a glimpse of the passengers inside and after doing so, she dropped her chin, and lifted her eyebrows, and remained transfixed and staring, like one demented.

"Eh, woman! what's come o'er ye? Are ye bewitched?" questioned Mr. Birney, as he passed her, in going into the house.

"Na, gudeman, I'm no bewitched; but just amazed like! Didna ye see yon bonny leddy lying back among the cushions? She that was all happed about wi' braw white velvets and furs?"

"Aweel, and what of her?"

"Hech, gudeman, she's na ither than the puir bit lassie that came ben to us that night o' the grand storm."

"Hout, woman! hauld your tongue! no' to ken the differ between a born leddy like this ane, and a young gilpey like yon!"

"I ken weel the differ between a leddy and a gilpey. And I dinna need *dress* to instruct me in it, either, gudeman. I kenned the lass was na gilpey when I saw her in her auld gray cloak; and I kenned her again in the bit glint I had of her bonny face as she lay back in her braw velvets and furs, wi' her wee bairn by her side. Eh! but I'd like to hear the rights iv that!"

"The rights o' what, woman?"

"The grand wedding pit aff again; the fine bridegroom ganging aff in a jiffey; this young, bonny leddy and her bairn made so muckle iv by the whole family. But it's na gude to speer questions. The minister will na speak; the doctor will na speak; the vera serving lads and lasses will na speak, although on ordinary occasions they're a' unco fond o' clackin their clavers. But we shall hear, gude man! we shall hear! Secrets like yon canna be kept, e'en gif they be stappit up in a bottle."

"Gudewife, ye'll do weel to gie your attention to your ain proper business and no meddle wi' that whilk dinna

concern you. The auld general pit us here to keep the gate, and no to speer questions into his preevate affairs. And though the situation is na sick a' gude ane, it might be waur. Sae we'll behoove to gie na offence wi' meddling," said Andy, as he sat down and opened his big Bible to read.

Meanwhile the Lyon family went on to church, which they entered just as the organ had ceased playing and the minister was opening his book.

It was not until after the last lesson of the morning service was over that the announcement was made:

"All persons having children present for baptism will now bring them forward."

Our whole party left their pew and proceeded to the front.

General Lyon, as senior sponsor, took the babe in his arms and presented him to the minister. Dick as junior sponsor stood by.

Anna was sole godmother.

And amid the customary prayers, promises, and benedictions, the child received the time-honored name of Leonard Lyon.

On their way home, the whole party congratulated each other with much affection and cheerfulness.

But withal, Dick, riding along slowly by the side of the carriage, was visited with some very serious reflections. He felt the great moral and religious responsibitity of the office he had undertaken. And thus he communed with himself:

"General Lyon is aged and cannot be expected to live very much longer. Anna is a woman. On me must devolve the duty of looking after that boy. Good Heavens; however did they come to think of making such a good for nothing dog as I am godfather to that innocent baby? It is enough to make my hair stand on end to think of it. The fact is, I must strike a light and look about myself. I must, I positively must and will, thoroughly mend my ways and reform my life! not only for Anna's sake—who knows me already, and takes me for better for worse with her eyes wide open—but for this innocent babe's sake, upon whom, without his knowledge or consent, they have thrust me for a godfather! No more gambling, no more

drinking, no more carousing with scamps, and squandering of money, Dick, my boy! Remember that you are godfather to Master Leonard Lyon, and responsible for his moral and religious education. And you must be equal to the occasion and true to the trust."

So profound were Dick's cogitations that he found himself at Old Lyon Hall before he was conscious of the fact.

He sprang from his horse in time to assist the old gentleman and the young ladies to alight.

And they all entered the house, where Drusilla was greeted by a pleasant surprise.

CHAPTER III.

SURPRISES.

Were her eyes open? Yes, and her mouth, too;
Surprise has this effect to make one dumb,
Yet leave the gate which eloquence slips through
As wide as if a long speech were to come.—BYRON.

THE family party first separated to go to their several chambers to lay aside their outside wrappings and to prepare for their early Sunday dinner.

Then they met in the drawing-room.

Drusilla, who had more to do than the others, was the latest to join them.

Her baby, that had slept soundly during the long ride from church, was now awake and required attention.

While she was engaged in her sweet maternal duties, she received a message from General Lyon requesting that his godson might be brought down into the drawing-room before dinner.

So as soon as the young mother had made herself and her child presentable, she went down-stairs, followed by the nurse carrying the babe.

On the threshold of the room she paused in pleased surprise, and not so much at the value of the presents displayed before her, as at the new instance of kindness on the part of her friends.

On a round table covered with a fine crimson cloth

were laid the christening offerings, of great splendor for their kind.

There was a richly chased silver casket filled with gold coins from General Lyon. There was a baby's silver gilt service—consisting of waiter, pap bowl, water jug, and drinking mug, cream pot, sugar basin, sugar tongs and spoons—from Dick. And there was a coral and bells of the finest coral, purest gold, and most superb workmanship, from Anna.

"Dear uncle! dear Anna and Dick, how kind, oh how kind, you all are to me and my boy! I cannot tell you how much I feel your kindness. I am very grateful; and I hope, oh, I hope, my dear little Leonard will live to thank you!" fervently exclaimed Drusilla, pressing the hand of her aged benefactor to her heart, and lifting her eyes full of loving gratitude to her young friends, who stood side by side enjoying her delight.

"My dear, it gives us as much pleasure to offer you these little tokens of our affection as it can possibly give you to receive them," answered General Lyon, drawing her towards him and touching her forehead with his lips.

"It does indeed, sweet cousin," added Dick.

And Anna, for her answer, silently kissed the young mother.

"And now to dinner, which has been announced for twenty minutes," smiled the old gentleman, drawing Drusilla's arm within his own and leading the way to the dining-room, where a feast of unusual elegance was laid in honor of the occasion.

The day closed in serene enjoyment.

When Drusilla retired to her room that evening, she found that the christening presents had been transferred from the round table in the drawing-room to an elegant little cabinet that had been purchased to receive them, and placed in the nursery.

Before she went to bed she knelt down and thanked Heaven for the mercies that now blessed her life.

As her head rested on her pillow, with the face of the sleeping babe near her, softly seen by the subdued light of the shaded lamp, she wondered at the peace that had descended upon her troubled spirit and made her calmly happy.

Had she then ceased to love her faithless husband?

Ah, no! for pure love like hers is of immortal life and cannot die. But she had ceased to sorrow for him, for sorrow is of mortal birth and cannot live forever.

She felt safe under the fatherly care of the fine old head of the family, cheerful in the company of her affectionate young friends Dick and Anna, and happy—oh, deeply, unutterably happy!—in the possession of her beautiful boy. She felt no trouble.

"Baby fingers, waxen touches pressed it from the mother's breast."

She never heard from Alick; but then, as she did not expect to hear from him, she was not disappointed.

She never heard from Cedarwood either; but then as she had left directions with the servants only to have letters written to her in case of necessity, she felt that, in this instance, "no news is good news."

Mammy was growing rather restive and desirous of returning to her home, but Drusilla besought her to remain a little longer at Old Lyon Hall.

"Wait," she said, "until the next spell of fine weather, when baby will be able to travel, and I too will return to Cedarwood. I must not stay away from the home provided for me by my husband, nor yet tax the hospitality of my dear friends longer."

Mammy looked puzzled, for though the faithful old household servants had carefully forborne to speak of unpleasant family affairs in the presence of the nurse, whom they looked upon as a stranger and an alien, still she *had* heard enough to give her the impression that young Mr. Lyon had abandoned his wife. Therefore Mammy was rather bewildered by this talk of returning to Cedarwood.

"I do not think as the General and the young people will consent to part with you, ma'am; and indeed I think it will a'most break all their hearts to lose little Master Leonard," said the nurse.

"I know they will not like it, because they are so kind to us—so very kind, and therefore I have shrunk from mentioning it to them; but my duty is clear—I must go to my own home and I must advise them of my purpose without delay."

"Well, ma'am, certingly, if they wants your company ever so, they ain't got no power to keep you ag'in' your will; and so, ma'am, if you is set to go home first fine spell arter Christmas, I reckon as I can wait and see you safe through," said the nurse, graciously.

"Thank you; it will be a great favor," replied Drusilla.

The time was drawing near to the Christmas holidays —a season always hitherto observed by the Lyons with great festivity—when they had been unbounded in their hospitality and munificent in their presents.

On this occasion, some five or six days before Christmas, General Lyon sent Dick to Richmond, armed with a handful of blank checks signed and left to be filled up at pleasure, and commissioned to purchase the most elegant and appropriate holiday gifts that he could find for every member of the family and every household servant; but above all, to get a handsome perambulator, a crib bedstead, and—a hobby horse for Master Leonard.

"Good gracious me, grandpa!" had been Anna's exclamation on hearing of this last item, "what on earth do you think a baby of a few weeks old can do with a hobby horse?"

"I don't know, my dear, but I wish to give it to him."

"He won't be able to sit on it for three years to come."

"And I may not live to see that time, my dear, and as I wish to give it to him I must do so now. It can be kept for him, you know. And now, while we are on the subject, I wish to ask you to have one of the many rooms in this house fitted up as a play-room for him. Let it be as near the nursery as possible; and whatever childish treasures I may purchase may be put there and kept until he is old enough to enjoy them."

This conversation had taken place in the presence of Drusilla; but as no part of it had been addressed to her, she only expressed her gratitude for the intended kindness by glancing thankfully from one speaker to the other.

But she felt more strongly than ever that, however reluctant she might be to announce her intended departure from such kind friends, it was incumbent upon her to do so before they should make any material change in their household arrangements for her sake.

So after a little hesitation she commenced:

"Dear friends, while ever I live in this world I shall remember your goodness to me, and with my last breath I shall pray Heaven to bless you for it. But——"

"We have pleased *ourselves* in this, my dear; so say nothing more about it," smiled the old gentleman, laying his hand kindly on her head.

"Thanks—a thousand thanks, dear sir; but I feel that I must soon leave you——"

"Leave us!" echoed General Lyon, Anna and Dick all in a breath.

"It is time for me to return to my home," she said, gently.

"Your home, Drusilla!" said General Lyon, in a grave and tender voice. "Poor child, where will you find so proper a home as this, where your relations with us give you the right to stay, and where our affection for you makes you more than welcome?"

"Nowhere, indeed, sir, but in the house provided for me, by—*my husband*," answered Drusilla, breathing the last two words in a scarcely audible tone.

"Ah! he has come to his senses; he has written and entreated you to join him. For the sake of my faith in human nature I am glad that he has done so," said the General.

"Oh, no, he has not yet written to me," smiled Drusilla.

"But you have heard from him?"

"No, not since that night."

"Then what do you mean, my dear, by talking of the home he has provided for you?"

"I mean the cottage to which he took me when we were first married—Cedarwood, near Washington."

"Where you suffered such cruel mental anguish as I should think would render the very thought of the place hateful to you, my poor child," said General Lyon, compassionately.

Drusilla gave him a pleading look that seemed to pray him to say nothing that might even by implication reproach her absent husband; and then she added:

"There were other memories and associations connected with Cedarwood, dear sir. The first few weeks of

my married life were very happy ; and my housekeeping and gardening very cheerful and pleasant."

"But all that is changed. Why go back there now?"

"Because it is my proper home."

"Yet—he—that man has not invited you to return?"

"No, but then I left of my own accord, and now that I am able to travel, it is my duty to go back, though uninvited. I must not wait to be asked to return to my post," said the young wife.

The General was silent and thoughtful for a moment and then he said, firmly:

"My child, you must think no more of this."

She looked at him; but hesitated to oppose him, and when she did answer she spoke gravely and gently:

"Dear sir, it is *right* for me to go."

"Drusilla, think no more of this, I say," he repeated, and this time with an air of assured authority.

"Dear uncle, why do you say so?"

"I might answer, it would be too painful to me to part with you and your boy."

"Thanks for saying that, sir. I too, feel that to leave this safe, sweet old home, and these loving friends, will be very painful; duty often is so; but not for that must we fail in it."

"Drusilla! I repeat that you must not think of taking this step! Not only has your unworthy——"

She looked at him so deprecatingly, that he broke off his speech and began anew.

"Well, well, I will not wound you if I can help it, my dear!—I say, not only has your husband not *invited* you to return to your home, but he has positively *forbidden* you to do so. Do you remember, poor child, the terms he used in discarding you?"

"Words spoken in the 'short madness' of anger. I do not wish to remember them, dear General Lyon," she sweetly answered.

"My child! do you know where to write to him?"

"Oh no, sir."

"Do you think that he will write to you? or do you hope that he will join you at Cedarwood?"

"Oh, no, dear uncle! at least, not for a long time. But I hope that he will feel some interest in his child, and he

will inquire about it, and when he finds out what a beautiful boy it is, he will come to see it; and then, then—for the boy's sake he will forgive the mother."

"Forgive! Heaven of Heavens, girl! what has he to forgive in you?" indignantly demanded Anna.

"That which a man seldom pardons—although it was done from love to him and his child," answered Drusilla, in a low voice.

"Then you really have a hope that he will rejoin you at Cedarwood?" inquired General Lyon.

"At some future day, sir, yes."

"And in the meanwhile you live alone there?"

"No, sir, not quite; but with my boy and servants.'

"And how do you propose to support the little establishment, my dear? Come, I wish to know your ideas; though I dare say, poor child, you have never thought of the subject."

"Oh yes, dear sir, I have. In the first place, I have nearly fifteen hundred dollars in money, left at home; that will keep us in moderate comfort for two years, especially as I have abundance of everything else on the premises—furniture, clothing and provisions, in the house; and a kitchen garden, an orchard, poultry yard and dairy, on the place. So, at the very worst, I could keep a market farm," smiled Drusilla.

"But in the meanwhile live alone, or with only your infant babe and your servants?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then I tell you, Drusilla, that you must not, shall not do so," repeated the General, with emphasis.

"Oh, sir, why would you hinder me?" she pleaded, lifting her imploring eyes to his face.

"For your salvation, dear child," he answered, very gently.

"But how for my salvation, dear uncle?"

"Drusilla, you cannot know, only heaven can know, how difficult, how *impossible* it is for a young forsaken wife to live alone and escape scandal."

"But, dear sir, if I do right, and trust in the Lord, I have nothing to fear."

"Poor child! I must answer you in the words of another old bore, as meddlesome as perhaps you think me.

Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny."

"But, sir, in addition to all that, I mean to be very discreet, to live very quietly with my little household, and to see no company whatever, except you and Anna, if you should honor me with a visit, and to make no visits except here."

"But you must go to church sometimes; and when your babe is ailing, you must see a doctor; also it will be necessary occasionally to have your chimneys swept; and the tax-gatherer will make you an annual visit."

"Of course, dear sir," she smiled.

"And yet you hope to preserve your good name?—Ah, my dear child, no forsaken wife, living alone can do so, much less one so very young and inexperienced as yourself. If the venomous 'fangs of malice' can find no other hold upon you, they will assail you through—the Christian minister who brings you religious consolation for your sorrows; the family physician who attends you in your illness, to save your life; to the legal adviser who manages your business; the tax-gatherer, the chimney-sweep, or anybody or everybody whom church, state, or need should call into your house."

"Ah, sir! that is very severe! I hope it is not as you think. I believe better of the world than that," said Drusilla.

"When the world has stung you nearly to death or to madness, my dear, you may judge more truly and less tenderly of it. And now, Drusilla, hear me. You do not go to Cedarwood; you do not leave our protection until your husband claims you of us. Let the subject drop here at once, and forever."

Drusilla bowed her head in silence; but she was not the less resolved at heart to return to Cedarwood, and risk all dangers, in the hope that her husband might some day join her there.

But Destiny had decided Drusilla's course in another direction.

The event that prevented her return to Cedarwood shall be related in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

A MESSENGER.

The boy alighted at the gate,
But scarce upheld his fainting weight;
His swarthy visage spake distress,
But this might be from weariness.—BYRON.

IN the sunshine of affection and happiness Drusilla grew beautiful and blooming. She loved her truant Alexander as faithfully as ever, but she loved him in hope and trust, and not in fear and sorrow. She felt that he was old enough, big enough and strong enough to take care of himself, even when out of her sight, while here upon her lap lay a lovely babe, a gift of the Heavenly Father to her, a soft little creature whose helplessness solicited her tenderness, whose innocence deserved it, and whose love will certainly return it.

Her baby gave her love for love, and the very faintness and feebleness of its little signs of love, made these sweet infant efforts all the more touching and pathetic. How could she trouble herself about Alexander and his doings while her little boy lay smiling in her eyes?

"Baby lips will laugh him down."

"Yes, my darling boy," she murmured, gazing fondly on his face, "you will always love me, and when you grow up to be a man you will love me all the more, because I shall be old and feeble." And her thoughts involuntarily reverted to the bearded man who had rejoiced in her health and beauty, but turned coldly away from her when she was sick and pale, and most needed his love and care.

Anna, who was sitting with her, laughed merrily.

Drusilla looked up, with just a shadow of annoyance on her fair face. And Anna answered the look:

"My dear, I laughed at what you said."

"Well, but I spoke truth. I know my darling *will* always love me, and when he grows up a tall, strong man, and I shall be an old and infirm woman, he will love

me more tenderly than before, because I *am* old and infirm," persisted the fond mother, stooping her lips to her boy's brow.

Anna laughed louder than ever.

" Why, Drusilla," she said, " you are but sixteen years old. When your son is grown up, say at twenty, you will be but thirty-six, in the very maturity of a healthy woman's strength and beauty. Your son will be your dearest friend and companion; if you have lost somewhat of the wife's happiness, you will have an unusual share of the mother's joy. You are still so young, such a mere child yourself, that you may take your little son by the hand with the prospect of going nearly the whole journey of life together. You will be his playfellow in his childish sports; his fellow student in his boyish studies, and his comrade in his youthful travels. You will go on in life and grow old together—or almost together."

" Oh, so we will. I did not think of it before. I was thinking that the mother of a grown son must be quite an aged lady. Alick's mother was quite aged and infirm."

" Yes, because she was forty-four years old when Alick was born, which makes some difference, you know.' laughed Anna.

There was silence a little while and then Anna said,

" You will have much joy in your son, if the Lord should spare him to you, Drusilla."

" The Lord *will* spare him to me. I feel convinced of it," answered the young mother reverently.

" And every year—nay, every month—your joy will increase; for as his affections and intelligence develop, he will grow more and more interesting and attractive to you."

" It seems to me that he could scarcely ever be more interesting and attractive than he is now. Look at him, Anna. See how beautiful are his mute, faint efforts to express the love he feels, but does not understand. ' Touch is the love sense.' He knows that, at least; and see how his little hands tremble up towards mine and then drop; and see the smile dawning in his eyes, and fluttering around his lips, as if uncertain of itself? Will you tell me, at what time of a child's existence it is sweeter and lovelier than now in its first budding into life?"

Before Anna could answer the question, the door was opened by mammy, who chirpingly announced:

"Here is Leo, from Cedarwood, ma'am, bringing letters for you."

And she closed the door, leaving Leo standing before his astonished mistress.

"It is my footman from my old home, dear Anna," explained Drusilla.

Then, turning to the messenger, she held out her hand and said:

"How do you do, Leo? You have letters for me?"

Leo slowly took a packet from his pocket, handed them over to his mistress, and then, lifting both his hands to his eyes, burst out crying and ROARED as only a negro boy with his feelings hurt can do.

"Why, what is the matter?" anxiously inquired Drusilla, pausing in the examination of her letters, in her pity for the distress of the boy—"What is the matter, my poor Leo?"

"Oh, mum, it is to see-hee," sobbed Leo "to see-hee you so well-hell, and hap-pappy, and to know as I am bring —hing bad news again! Seems like I was born—horn to be the death of you, ma'am," said the boy, scarcely able to articulate through his sobs.

"I hope not, Leo. Sit down and compose yourself. I trust your master is well."

"Oh yes, mum, he is well enough (*wish to Goodness Gracious he wasn't!*) but he's done, tored up everything and—Boo! hoo! ooo!" cried Leo, gushing out into such a cataract of tears and sobs that he was forced to bury his face in his big bandana and sink into a seat.

"Compose yourself, Leo, and I will read my letters. They will explain, I suppose," said Drusilla, opening the packet.

There were three letters from her lawyers, which she laid aside; and there was one from her husband, which she opened and read. It ran thus:

"CEDARWOOD, Dec. 22, 18—.

"MADAM:—Had you chosen to remain quietly in the home I provided for you it should have been yours for life, with a sufficient income to keep it up. But as you

voluntarily left it, you have forfeited your right to return to it, as well as your claims upon me for support. The place is now dismantled and sold. The messenger who takes this letter has charge of all your personal effects, and will deliver them over to you. ALEXANDER LYON."

We know the time, not so long since, when the young wife would have screamed, cried or swooned at the reception of such a letter from her husband.

Now, she simply bent forward and laid it on the fire, and when it blazed up and sank to ashes, she said:

"It is gone; and now it shall be forgotten."

And then she stooped and kissed her babe.

Leo, stealing an anxious glance at her, misunderstood the movement and started forward, exclaiming:

"Oh, mum! don't go for to faint; please don't."

Drusilla looked at him and smiled kindly, saying

"I am not likely to do so, my boy. I am strong and healthy now, thank Heaven! and besides, there is nothing to faint about. I am only a little sorry that the cottage is sold."

"Oh, mum! don't! I shall cry again if you do! Oh, mum, you used to say as how you would make that wilderness to bloom and blossom as the rose; and so you did, mum, lovely! But oh, mum! he have turned the beautiful place into a howling wilderness again!" bawled the boy.

"Never mind, Leo, I will get it back again some day and restore all its beauty," said Drusilla, smiling. "And now, my boy, where is your sister?"

"She have gone back to Alexandria, mum; but sends her love and service to you, mum."

"And the poor pets—the little birds, and the cat and kittens, Leo?"

"Pina has got them all to take care on for you, ma'am, till you sends for 'em and for her, cause she considers of herself into your service, ma'am, which likewise so do I."

"And the cow and calf, and the horses, Leo?"

"They was sold to the people as bought the place, ma'am."

"I hope they will be kindly treated."

"I hope they will, ma'am; for they did miss you as

well as me and Pina did; and they showed it in every way as dumb creeturs could."

"And where did you leave my effects, Leo?"

"I brought as many trunks as I could on the stage with me, ma'am; and the rest of the boxes is coming down by wagons. Pina was very careful in packing everything, ma'am; and here is the money you gave me to keep," said Leo, taking a sealed packet from his breast pocket, and handing it to his mistress.

"Thanks, my boy; you and your sister have been very faithful, and I shall certainly retain you both in my service, and at an increase of wages."

"Oh, ma'am, neither me, nor yet Pina is mussenary. We'll be glad to come back to you on any terms."

"And now, Leo, look here! Here is my baby boy; when the spring comes he will be big enough for you to take him on your shoulder and ride him about! Won't you and he have a good time?"

"Oh, ma'am, what a purty little creetur! But he's *very* little, ain't he, ma'am?" said Leo, looking shyly at the baby, which indeed he had been furtively contemplating ever since he had been in the room.

"Why, no, Leo; for his age, he is very large, *very!* Who is he like, Leo! Look and tell me.!'

Leo dutifully looked, and saw well enough who the boy really was like: but he answered stoutly:

"He is like you, ma'am, and nobody else."

"Oh, look again, Leo! His eyes are open now. *Now* who is he like?"

"He is the image of *you*, ma'am, and not another mortial in the wide world," repeated Leo, defiantly.

"How *can* you say that, you stupid boy? Is he not like his father?"

"No, mum! not the leastest little bit in life! He is like nobody but you," persisted the lad, doggedly.

"Leo, you are a mole! You have no eyes! Now go down to your mother, and tell her to make you comfortable."

"Thank you, ma'am. I am so glad to see you so well. ma'am, with such a fine-looking baby. I am so thankfu' as you don't take on about thinks like you used to do," replied the lad.

"I am so much better and stronger now, Leo. But go and give my message to your mother."

Leo bowed and left the room.

"So Alick has sold Cedarwood," said Anna.

"Yes."

"What a wretch!"

"*Please*, Anna——"

"I can't comprehend your tenderness for that man, Drusilla! but, there! I will not wound it if I can help it. I am glad he has sold Cedarwood, however. It settles the question of your future residence. You must stay with us now."

As Anna spoke, General Lyon entered the room, and came with his pleasant smile and sat down beside his protégée.

She turned to him, and, laying her hand in his, said:

"My fate is decided for me, dear sir. I have no home but this, and no protector but you."

"My darling, I am very glad."

Yet, in saying this, the General looked from his adopted niece to his granddaughter, as if for an explanation.

Seeing Drusilla hesitate, Anna answered for her.

"Yes, sir, that vill—I mean Mr. Alexander Lyon—has sold Cedarwood."

The General now looked from his granddaughter back to his niece as if demanding confirmation of the news.

"Yes," admitted Drusilla, casting down her eyes—in regret for him, not in sorrow for herself; "he has sold Cedarwood, but then, you know, dear sir, that I had left the house."

A flush of shame crimsoned the cheek, a frown of anger darkened the brow of the veteran soldier.

"And that man calls himself a Lyon and my nephew! I am glad now that they never called him Leonard! There never was a rascally Leonard Lyon yet! And I am very glad, my dear, that you did not name our noble boy here Alexander! The infern——"

Drusilla raised her hand with an imploring and deprecating gesture.

"Well, well, my dear, I will try not to offend again. It is true that an old soldier has a right to swear at his degenerate nephew; but not in the presence of ladies, I

confess. So let the scound—I mean Alick—go. Yes, let him go, and joy go with him, especially as, setting the baseness of the act aside, I am really very glad he *has* sold Cedarwood for it settles the question of your residence with us, my dear."

"And I am glad to stay here," answered Drusilla, with a smile. "It is true that I thought it my duty to go back to Cedarwood, and await there the pleasure of my husband; and I should have risked everything and gone there, if he had not sold the place. And I know I should have had to wait long months or years for his return; and I should have been very lonely and dreary, and should have missed you and dear Anna and Dick very much. No, upon the whole, I cannot say that I am sorry to be relieved of the duty of going back to Cedarwood to live alone," said Drusilla, frankly.

"That's my girl! Sorry? no, I should think you would not be. What should you want with Cedarwood, trumpery toy cottage, with its little belt of copsewood, when you have Old Lyon Hall and its magnificent surroundings of forests and mountains?—to say nothing of having ME and Anna and Dick!" exclaimed the old man, holding out his hand to his favorite.

She took it and pressed it to her lips, and then answered:

"Yet I love the pretty little wildwood home; and some day I will buy it back again, even if I have to pay twice or thrice its value."

General Lyon looked up, surprised to hear the discarded wife and dependent woman talk so bravely of buying estates at fancy prices, even as Anna had looked at having heard her speak so freely of retaining her old servants at double wages. Yet both were pleased, for they said to themselves—"This proves that she has the fullest confidence in us, and knows that we will never let her feel a want, even a fantastic or extravagant want, unsupplied." And the General answered:

"That is right, my dear girl. So you shall buy it back—to-morrow, if you like! or as soon after as we can bring the present proprietor to terms. Mr. Alexander shall learn that some things can be done as well as others. But Drusilla, my darling, although we may purchase the

place and restore it, I do not mean to consent that you shall ever return there to live alone; remember that."

"I do not mean to do so, sir. I will never leave you until my husband calls me back to him," said Drusilla, giving him her hand.

"That is right! that is sensible! Now, since you are fond of that little bird-cage, I will set about buying it for you directly. You shall have it for a New Year's gift; and then if you *must* see the place sometimes, why we can all go and live there instead of at a hotel, when we go to Washington for the season."

"Oh, how kind, how good you are to me," breathed Drusilla, in a soft and low tone, with deep emotion; "but dear sir, do not think that I thank, or love, or bless you any the less, when I say that I do not wish this as a gift from your munificent hands. Dear uncle, I am well able to afford myself the pleasure of possessing my 'toy cottage.'"

"Ah! he *has* provided handsomely for you, after all! Come! his villainy is a shade less black—I beg your pardon, my child! I won't again! indeed I won't—I mean his—transaction is a shade lighter than I supposed it. Well, I am glad, for his sake, that he has provided for you. But, Drusilla, my child, I would not take his money! having denied you his love and protection I would take nothing else from him."

"Dear uncle, although I do not need anything from my Alick except his love, yet, should he offer anything, I would gratefully accept it, hoping that his love would follow. But you are mistaken—he has made no provision for me."

"What did you mean then, my dear, by refusing Cedarwood as my gift and saying that you were able to purchase it yourself?"

"I have a large fortune in my own right, dear sir."

"A fortune in your own right!" echoed Anna, in astonishment.

"You never mentioned this circumstance before, my dear," said the General, in surprise and incredulity.

"Indeed, I had utterly forgotten it until my servant arrived with these letters from my solicitors. It was very stupid of me to forget it; but, dear sir, only think how

many more important matters there were to drive it out of my head," replied Drusilla, deprecatingly.

"For my part, I do not think that anything can be more important to you, in present circumstances than the inheritance of a large fortune. It *is* an inheritance, I suppose?"

"Oh yes, sir,—from my grand-uncle, a merchant of San Francisco."

"And how large is the fortune?"

"I do not know, sir—some millions, I think. Here are the lawyer's letters. I have not looked at them yet," said Drusilla, putting the "documents" in the hands of her old friend.

"Astounding indifference!" he murmured to himself as he put on his spectacles and opened the letters.

Drusilla and Anna watched him attentively.

"Why, my dear child, you are a billionaire! You are probably the wealthiest woman in America!" exclaimed the General, in astonishment. "That is, if there is no mistake!" he added. "Are you sure you are the right heiress?" taking off his spectacles and gazing at Drusilla.

"I am quite sure, sir. There are too few of us to afford room for confusion. In my grand-uncle's generation, there were but two of the family left—himself and his only brother, my grandfather. My grand-uncle, being a woman hater, lived and died a bachelor. My grandfather married, and had one only child—my father: who, in his turn, also married, and had one only child—myself. You see how plain and simple is the line of descent?"

"I see," said the General, reflectively; "but, my dear, it is not sufficient for a set of facts to be true in themselves, they must be capable of being proved to the satisfaction of a court of law. Can all these births, marriages, and deaths be proved, Drusilla?"

"Oh, yes sir; there are so few of them—they have occurred within so short a time, comparatively speaking."

"In what manner, my dear? Remember, Drusilla, that what might convince you or me of a fact might not have the same effect upon a court."

"All that I have said, dear sir, can be established to the satisfaction of the most scrupulous court that ever existed

by church registers and court records, family Bibles, tombstones, papers, letters, and personal friends."

"I am glad to hear it. And you know where all these proofs can be found?"

"Yes, sir. Many of them, Bibles, letters, documents, and so forth, are in my possession. All the others are to be found in Baltimore."

"Where a large portion of your inheritance lies, and where your lawyers live?"

"Yes, sir."

"Yes; well, my dear, if all this is as you suppose it to be—and I have no doubt that it is so—your way to fortune is clear enough! Let me congratulate you, my dear, on being, perhaps, the richest woman in America!" said the General, shaking her hands warmly.

Anna also heartily added her own congratulations.

"And now, my child," said the General, kindly, "let us attend to this business at once. Your lawyers are naturally displeased and suspicious at your long delay. As you are not very much of a business woman, you will let me take these letters to my study and answer them for you."

"Oh, if you would be so kind, dear sir, I should be so happy."

CHAPTER V.

FORTUNE.

Fortune is merry,
And in this mood will give us anything—SHAKESPEARE.

So General Lyon answered the lawyers' letters, and in a more satisfactory manner, it is to be presumed, than Drusilla had ever done. His illustrious name and exalted position were in themselves enough to dispel any doubts that the mysterious reticence of the heiress might have raised in the minds of her solicitors.

Having sent his letter off to the post-office, and knowing that several days must elapse before he could hear from the solicitors again, the old gentleman dismissed the

matter from his mind, and addressed himself to the enjoyment of the Christmas festival now at hand.

Dick arrived from Richmond on Christmas Eve, having in charge several large boxes containing the Christmas presents.

Among them were the crib, the perambulator and the hobby-horse, which were all deposited for the present in the room selected and fitted up by Anna, as the future playroom of little Master Leonard Lyon.

Anna's and Drusilla's presents consisted of rich and costly furs and shawls, from the General; and splendid jewels and delicate laces from Dick.

The veteran's gifts were a pair of soft, embroidered velvet slippers and smoking-cap, from Anna; a warm quilted dressing-gown from Drusilla; and a new patent reading-chair of unequalled ingenuity, comfort and convenience, from Dick.

Dick's presents were a fowling-piece of the most superior workmanship, from his uncle; an embroidered cigar case from his betrothed; and a smoking-cap from Drusilla.

Besides these, each male and female servant in the house was made happy in the possession of a new and complete Sunday suit.

After the distribution of the presents on Christmas morning the family went to church.

At the end of the service they returned to an early dinner, and spent the afternoon and evening in social enjoyment.

As usual in the Christmas holidays, General Lyon gave one large party, to which he invited all his friends and acquaintances for thirty miles around.

And at this party he formally introduced Drusilla as:

"My niece, Mrs. Alexander Lyon."

And this he did with so much quiet dignity, as in most cases to repress all expression of surprise from those who could not fail to wonder at such an introduction. And if any had the temerity to utter their astonishment, they were courteously silenced by the answer of the stately old gentleman.

"Old people cannot and ought not to choose for their sons in affairs of the heart. I had hoped that my nephew and my granddaughter would have married each other,

for my sake ; but I was wrong. They have each chosen partners for their own sakes; and they were right. Come here, Dick: Sir and madam, let me present to you Mr. Richard Hammond as my future and well-beloved grandson-in-law."

After that what could the gossips say or do? Of course nothing but bow, courtesy and congratulate; though some among them, being maliciously inclined, and envying the young heiress of Old Lyon Hall her beauty and her wealth, did shrug their shoulders and raise their eyebrows as they whispered together: That it was very strange Miss Lyon's marriage being put off so frequently and she herself at last passed so carelessly from one bridegroom to another ; and that it looked but too likely she would be an old maid after all ; for she was getting on well in years now!

A very false and spiteful conclusion this, as the beautiful Anna was not yet twenty-three years old.

Some even had the ill-luck to inquire of the General, or of Anna, or Dick :

"Where is Mr. Alexander Lyon now?"

But the quiet answer was always the same :

"In Washington, attending to the sale of some real estate there."

And the conversation would be quickly turned.

With the exception of these annoying questions, implied or directly asked, and which General Lyon knew must be sooner or later met and answered, and which he felt had best be settled at once, the party passed off as pleasantly as any of its predecessors had done.

On this occasion at least there was no failure upon account of the weather. There never was a finer starlight winter night to invite people *out.*

Nor was there any tampering with the lamps of the long drawing-room ; there never was seen a more brilliantly lighted and warmed saloon to entice people *in.*

The music was inspiring ; the dancing was animated, the supper excellent. The festivities were kept up all night.

And did Drusilla enjoy the party?

Of course she did. Why not? She could *love* forever, but she could not *grieve* forever. She was experiencing

a delightful reaction from her long depression of spirits. She was young and beautiful, and formed to give and receive pleasure amid these Christmas festivities. In a rich white moire antique dress, delicately trimmed with black lace and black jet, she looked exquisitely pretty. To please her friends and also a little to please herself she danced—first with General Lyon, who led her to the head of a set to open the ball; then with Dick, and afterwards with any others whom her uncle introduced to her. And all who made her acquaintance were charmed with the beauty and sweetness of the lovely, childlike creature.

A refreshing breakfast was served at seven o'clock; after which, the guests, well pleased, took leave and departed by the light of the rising sun.

Early in the new year, "mammy," well paid for her faithful services and loaded with tokens of her patient's good-will, took leave of the family and of her fellow-servants and left Old Lyon Hall to return to her own home in Alexandria.

She was attended by Leo, who was commissioned to bring down Pina and the birds, the dog, the cat, and the kittens; for to mammy's perfect content, the brother and sister were again to enter together the service of Mrs. Lyon.

"I have brought up my chillum respectable which it is allus my pride and ambition so to do, and likewise to have them engaged in service long o' the old respectable, rustycratic families, which none can be more so than the Lyonses of Old Lyon Hall, and that to *my* sartain knowledge, which has heard of them ever since I was born," said mammy, on parting with her gossip, Marcy. "And I hopes, ma'am," she added, "if you sees my young people agoing wrong, you'll make so free for my sake as to correct them; which their missus, the young madam, is much too gentle-hearted for to do; but gives them their own head far too much."

Marcy gave a promise to have an eye upon the boy and girl—a promise she was but too likely to keep.

And so mammy departed, well pleased.

The very day she left, the wagons from Washington City, containing Drusilla's personal effects from Cedar-

wood, which had been delayed by the bad condition of the roads, arrived at Saulsburg.

General Lyon, being duly apprised of the circumstance by a messenger from the "Foaming Tankard," sent carts to meet them.

But more than one day was occupied with the removal.

For Alexander Lyon, either from pride, compunction, or a faint revival of the old love, or from all these motives combined, had sent down not only Drusilla's wardrobe and books, but every article of furniture that particularly appertained to her use. And all these were very carefully packed, so as to sustain no injury from the roughness of the roads over which they were brought.

There was first a whole wagon load of boxes filled with the rich and costly wearing apparel with which he had overwhelmed her in the days of his devotion.

Then there was another load composed of her mosaic work-table, sewing chair, and footstool; her enameled writing-desk, work-box and dressing-case; her favorite sleepy hollow of a resting-chair; and other items too numerous to mention.

The third load comprised her sweet-toned cottage piano, her harp, and her guitar.

It took two days to transport these things from Saulsburg to Old Lyon Hall, and it took two more days to unpack and arrange them all in Drusilla's apartments.

The fond and faithful young wife contemplated these dear familiar objects with a strange blending of tenderness, regret and hope. Each item was associated with some sweet memory of her lost home and lost love. But even now she did not weep; she smiled as she whispered to her heart:

"He does not know it, but he loves me still; and some day he will come and tell me so. I can wait for that bright day, Alick, my Alick, when I shall place my boy in your arms and tell you how in the darkest hours I never ceased to love you and never doubted your love!"

She was absorbed for a little while, and then once more she murmured to herself in her beautiful reverie:

"For what would love be if darkness could obscure its light, or wrong destroy its life?"

Ah! if this devoted young wife ever does succeed in

WINNING HER WAY to the heart and conscience of her husband, she will do it through the power of her love and faith alone.

Before the week was out Drusilla had another pleasure, in the arrival of Leo and Pina with her pets.

She received them all with gladness.

"Oh, ma'am," exclaimed Pina, "but it does my very heart good to see you looking so rosy and bright-eyed! And I'm just dying to see young Master Leonard! And I am to be his nurse, ain't I, ma'am? And how is the dear little darling pet? And, oh, I am so glad to see you looking so well and so happy!"

"I am very happy to see you also, Pina," said Drusilla, when the girl had stopped for want of breath. "I hope you left your mammy well."

"Oh, as well as possible, ma'am; but with *baby on the brain* as sure as she lives, in regard to talking about little Master Leonard, which she stands to it is the finest baby as ever she saw among the hundreds and hundreds as she has had the honor of—of—of——"

Pina paused for want of words or breath.

"Of first introducing to their friends and relations," added Drusilla, laughingly coming to the girl's relief.

"Yes, ma'am, that is the way to put it," said Pina, approvingly. "But please, ma'am, may I see little Master Leonard?" she pleaded, eagerly.

"Go with Matty first, Pina. She will show you the room where you are to sleep, and which joins the nursery. Wash your face and hands, and change your traveling dress for a clean one, and then come to my chamber, which is on the other side of the nursery, and I will show you our baby."

"Thank you, ma'am. Yes, ma'am. I am a perfect show for dust and dirt, I know, and in no state to go nigh a dainty little baby," said Pina, courtesying, and then following Matty from the sitting parlor where this interview had taken place.

And thus Drusilla's surroundings at Old Lyon Hall were soon arranged to her perfect satisfaction.

CHAPTER VI.

ENTERTAINING ANGELS.

Little can we tell, who share
Our household hearth of love and care;
Therefore with grave tenderness,
Should we strive to love and bless
All who live this little life,
Soothing sorrows, calming strife,
Lest we wrong some seraph here,
Who has left the starry sphere,
Exiled from the heavens above,
To fulfil some mortal love.—T. POWELL.

IN the course of the next week, one or more from every family who had been invited to the Christmas party, called, and all who did so, left cards also for Mrs. Alexander Lyon.

Besides this, Mrs. Colonel Seymour, the nearest neighbor and most intimate friend of the Lyons, issued invitations for a large party to come off on Twelfth Night. And the General, Anna, Drusilla and Dick, each received one.

"What shall you wear, Drusilla?" inquired Anna, as the two young women sat together looking at their cards.

"Dear Anna, I do not know that I shall go," answered Drusilla, gravely.

"Why not?"

"I have an instinctive feeling that I should live very quietly while separated from my husband—live, in fact, as I should have lived, if I had gone back to Cedarwood alone."

"If you had gone back to Cedarwood alone, it would have been eminently necessary for you to have lived the life of a hermit, to save your reputation from utter ruin; and even then you could not have saved your character from misconstruction and misrepresentation. But now you are living with us, which makes all the difference. Here you may freely enjoy all the social pleasures natural

to your youth. The most malignant stabber of fair fame that ever lived would never dare to assail a lady who is a member of General Lyon's family," said Anna, proudly. "And it was to secure this freedom of action and these social enjoyments to you, no less than to shield you from danger, that my dear grandfather so firmly insisted on your remaining with us," she added.

"Oh, how can I be grateful enough to him for all his loving kindness to me? Oh, Anna, under Divine Providence, he has been my salvation!" exclaimed Drusilla her face beaming with gratitude and affection.

"I am very glad you came here as you did, my dear, and gave him the opportunity of doing what he has done. He has a great large heart, and not objects enough to fill it. He is very fond of you and your boy, and your presence here makes him happier. But 'to return to our muttons'—about this party at the Seymours. Now, as to your scruples about going into company, instead of living secluded on account of Alexander's desertion,—dismiss them at once. Leaning on my grandfather's arm,—for he is to be your escort, and Dick mine,—you can go anywhere with safety. But, if there is any other reason why you do not wish to go to the Seymours, of course you can stay at home. We wish you to use the most perfect freedom of action, my dear Drusilla, and we will only interfere when we see you inclined to immolate yourself upon the pagan altar of your idol. So, in the matter of the party, pray do as you please."

"Then, if you and uncle think it right, I would like very much to go with you. I enjoy parties. I enjoyed ours very much."

"I should think you did. You are not seventeen years old yet, and all your social pleasures are to come. You were the beauty of the evening, my little cousin."

"Oh no, Anna, oh, no, no, *no*, Anna! that I never could be where *you* are!" exclaimed Drusilla, blushing intensely with the earnestness of her denial.

"Nonsense! I am an old maid. I am quite *passée*. I am nearly twenty-three years old, and have been out five seasons!" laughed Anna, with the imperious disdain of her own words with which a conscious beauty sometimes says just such things.

"Oh, Anna, Anna, how can you say such things of yourself? I would not let any one else say them of you, Anna! Why, Anna, you know you moved through your grandfather's halls that night a perfect queen of beauty. There was no one who could at all equal or approach you!"

"Nonsense, I say! I overheard several people say that I was not looking so well as usual—that I had seen my best days, and so forth."

"They were envious and spiteful people whom you had eclipsed, Anna, and, if *I* had heard them, I should have given them to know it!"

"*You*, you little pigeon, can you peck?" laughed Anna.

"Pigeons can peck, and sharply too, I assure you. And I should have pecked any one whom I heard saying impertinent things of you; but I heard nothing of the sort—I heard only praises and admiration. But there! I declare you ought not to disparage yourself so as to oblige me to tell the truth about you to your face, for, in this case, truth is high praise, and it is perfectly odious to have to praise a friend to her face," said Drusilla.

"I agree with you. So, if you will let me have the last word and say that you really *were* the beauty of our ball, I will consent to drop the subject. And now for the other one! So you would like to go to the Seymours'?"

"Yes, very much, for I enjoy parties. I do not think I should like to go to one every day or even every week; but once or twice a month I really should enjoy them."

"What a moderate little belle! Well, and now comes the next important question. What are we to wear? Unluckily we cannot order the carriage and drive down the street to the most fashionable modiste's and inspect the newest styles of dress goods and head-dresses and all that, as if we were in the city. We are in the country, and must make our toilet from what we have got in the house. Heigh ho! it is a great bore, being so far away from shops."

"But, oh, Anna, we have got so much in the house. Think of your magnificent trousseau, with scarcely one of your many dresses touched yet."

"That is all very well. But you know they were made and trimmed between two and six months ago; and

every week something new in the way of trimmings and head-dresses comes up in town. However, we must do the best we can. It is a country ball and all the guests will be in the same case, that is one comfort."

"Not one of them will be so well off as you are with your trousseau."

"That is true, and that is another comfort, a very selfish one however. Well, let me see, I think I will wear my light blue taffeta, with a white illusion over it, looped up with bluebells and lilies of the valley, with a wreath of the same. How will that do?"

"It will be very pretty and tasteful."

"And you, my darling? What have you to wear? You know my dresses fit you, and my wardrobe is quite at your service."

"Thanks, dear Anna; but I have a great plenty of dresses that have never been worn, and of dress goods that have never been made up. In the first weeks of our married life my dear Alick bought every rich and pretty thing he could lay his hands on for me."

"Very well, then. What shall you wear?"

"You know that being in the second year of my mourning, I am restricted to black and white. I think a black illusion over black silk, with the sleeves and bosom edged with ruches of white illusion; pearl necklace and bracelets, and half open white moss roses in my hair and on my bosom; white kid gloves and a white fan. There, Anna dear, I have given you a complete description of my intended toilet."

"And nothing could be prettier. Here comes grandpapa!"

And at that moment the old gentleman entered the room.

"Well, my dears, if we *are* immured in the country at this festive season of the year, we are not likely to be very dull, are we?" smiled the old gentleman, holding out his card.

"No indeed, sir; that we are not! But what do you think of Drusilla here? She was really meditating upon the propriety of giving up all society, and living the life of a recluse," said Anna, mischievously.

"Well, if such a life is so much to her taste, we have

no sort of right to object," the old man replied, in the same spirit of raillery.

"But it is not to her taste. Drusilla is formed by nature and disposition to enjoy all innocent social pleasures. But she imagined that in her peculiar circumstances it became her duty to retire from the world altogether."

The veteran turned his clear eyes kindly on his protégée, and taking her hand, said:

"My dear child, when I gave you a daughter's place in my heart and home, and took a father's position towards you, I became responsible for the safety of your fair fame as well as for your person. Both are perfectly secure under my protection. No one will venture to assail the one more than the other. Go wherever Anna goes, enjoy all that she enjoys. It is even well that you should have the harmless recreations natural to your youth, and that she should have a companion of her own sex. And I shall always be your escort."

Drusilla pressed the old man's hand to her heart and lips; it was her usual way of thanking him.

And this quite settled the question, if it had not been settled before.

When Twelfth Day came, Anna and Drusilla, beautifully attired in the dresses they had decided upon, and escorted by General Lyon, and Dick, went to the Seymours' party.

As at the Christmas ball, Drusilla's beauty created a great sensation; not, indeed, that she was more beautiful than Miss Lyon, but her beauty was of a fresher type. As before, General Lyon was her first partner, and Richard Hammond her second. And after that, there was great rivalry among the candidates for the honor of her hand. But she danced only quadrilles; and only with those presented to her by her uncle. This ball, like all country balls, was kept up all night. But General Lyon's age and Drusilla's maternal solicitude, both rendered it expedient that they should retire early. So a few minutes after twelve, the old gentleman and his protégée took leave, promising that the coachman should have orders to return at daylight and fetch Anna and Dick home.

After this followed other parties given by the country gentry. And to all of them the Lyons were invited, and

in all the invitations Drusilla was included. And the lovely young wife was admired by all who saw her, and beloved by those who came to know her well.

Occasionally, embarrassing questions were asked by those who had more curiosity than tact, but they were always skilfully parried by the party to whom they were put.

For instance, when some old crony would venture to ask the General how it was that Mr. Alick had married this clergyman's orphan daughter when all the world supposed him to be about to marry his cousin Anna, the General would answer as before:

"That projected marriage was a plan of mine and of my brother's; and as it was based upon our own wishes rather than on the affections of our young people, it did not succeed, and did not deserve to do so. The aged cannot choose for the young in affairs of the heart. My nephew married this charming girl privately one year ago, and the ceremony was repeated publicly in my house two months since. I gave the bride away. And I am very much charmed with my niece. My granddaughter Anna, and my grandnephew, Richard Hammond, will be united in a few months."

"But where is the happy bridegroom now?' might be the next question.

"Alexander is in Washington negotiating the sale of real estate," would be the answer.

Sometimes a troublesome questioner, in the form of some young friend or companion would assail Anna, in some such way as this:

"Well, we were never more surprised in our lives than when we found out that Alick Lyon had married a parson's daughter without a penny. We thought you were going to take him, Anna?"

"But I preferred Dick," would be Anna's frank reply.

"Then I suppose he married the clergyman's daughter in a fit of pique."

"Not at all; it was in a fit of love."

"And she quite penniless."

"I beg your pardon, she is a very wealthy woman."

"What! the clergyman's daughter?"

"Yes, for she is a billionaire's niece, and a sole heiress"

"Oh! then it was a mercenary match?"

"Not at all, for he knew nothing of her fortune when he married her. And now, also, please remember you are speaking of my cousins."

"Beg your pardon, Anna! I mean no harm; and you know you and I are such old, old friends!"

Very often it would be Richard Hammond who would be called to the witness stand with a—

"Hillo, Dick! so you are a lucky dog after all! How was it now? Come, tell us all about it! Did you cut Alick out with Anna, or did the pretty little parson's daughter cut Anna out with Alick?"

"Each one of us cut all the others out," Dick would reply, with owl-like gravity.

"Eh? what? stop, don't go away! How can that be? We don't understand!"

"Well, if you don't that's your look out. *I* can't make you understand."

And so Dick would turn off impertinent inquiry.

Fortunately, also, everywhere Drusilla's face and manners inspired perfect confidence and warm esteem. No one could look on her, or hear her speak, and doubt her goodness.

"It is very queer. There's a screw loose somewhere; but whoever may be wrong, *she* is all right," was the verdict of the neighborhood in the young wife's favor.

Meanwhile a very brisk correspondence went on between General Lyon on one part, and Messrs. Henage and Kent (Drusilla's lawyers) on the other. The General soon convinced the legal gentlemen that Anna Drusilla Lyon, born Stirling, was the heiress of whom they were in search.

Still, where so much was at stake, they were bound to be very cautious and to receive nothing, not the very smallest fact, upon trust.

So, though General Lyon very seldom troubled Drusilla with this correspondence, he did sometimes feel obliged to come to her for information as to where a certain important witness was to be found; in what cemetery a particular tombstone was to be looked for; or in what parish church such a marriage had been solemnized, or such a baptism administered.

And Drusilla's prompt and pointed answers very much cleared and expedited the business.

In a more advanced stage of affairs it seemed that she would have to go up to Baltimore; but General Lyon would not hear of her taking any trouble that he could save her; so he wrote to the legal gentlemen, requesting one of the firm to come down to Old Lyon Hall in person, or to send a confidential clerk, and promising to pay all expenses of traveling, loss of time, and so forth.

In answer to this letter, Mr. Kent, the junior partner, arrived at the old hall early in February.

He was armed with a formidable bag of documents and he was closeted all day long with General Lyon in the study.

One can have no secrets from one's lawyer any more than from one's physician or confessor; and so General Lyon felt constrained to tell Mr. Kent of the existing estrangement between the heiress and her husband.

"And what I particularly wish," said the General, confidentially and earnestly, "is that the whole of this large inheritance, coming as it does from *her* family, may be secured to her separate use, independently of her husband."

"And that, you are aware, cannot be done, except through a process of law. She must sue for a separate maintenance. Even in such a case I doubt whether the court would adjudge her the *whole* of this enormous fortune, or even the half of it. Still it is her only resource," answered Lawyer Kent.

"A resource she will never resort to. It would be vain and worse than vain to suggest it to her. She worships her husband; and it is through no fault of hers that they are estranged. Indeed it was through consideration for him that she was so reticent last year, as to raise suspicions in your mind that her claim to the estate was an unjustly assumed one. No, Mr. Kent, we must take some other course to secure the inheritance to her, and without saying a word to her on the subject either."

"There is no other way, sir, but by such a suit as I have suggested."

"Pardon me, I think there is. Mr. Alexander Lyon has deserted his wife and child and failed to provide for them. Such is not the course of an honorable man. Still, as some of the same sort of blood that warms my

own old heart runs also in his veins, there must be some little sense of honor sleeping somewhere in his system. We must awaken it and appeal to it. He must of his own free will make over all his right, title and interest in this inheritance to his injured young wife."

"Does he know of this inheritance, sir?"

"Not one word, I think."

"Do you believe that he will act as you wish?"

"I have not the least doubt of it. Without this fortune of his wife, he is as rich as Crœsus; and he is also as proud as Lucifer. Having discarded her, he would not touch a penny of her money, if it was to save his own life or hers. So it is not because I think he would waste, or even use her means, that I wish her fortune settled upon herself, but because I wish her to be totally independent of him and to be able to do her own will with her own money."

"I see," said Mr. Kent. "Where is Mr. Alexander Lyon now?"

"In Washington City, where I would like you to call upon and apprise him of this large inheritance and of our wishes in regard to it."

"I will do so with pleasure. Pray give me your instructions at large, and also a letter of introduction to Mr. Lyon."

"I had almost sworn never to hold any communication with that man again. But for his wife's dear sake I will write the letter. And now Mr. Kent, there is our first dinner-bell. Allow me to ring for a servant, who will show you to a chamber prepared for you. I will await you here and take you to the dining-room."

The dust-covered lawyer bowed his thanks and followed the servant who was called to attend him.

At dinner that day, the lawyer, for the first time met his beautiful client, Mrs. Alexander Lyon. And with all his experience of mankind, great was his wonder that any man in his sober senses could have abandoned such a lovely young creature.

Mr. Kent stayed two days at Old Lyon Hall, and then, primed with instructions and with a letter to Alexander, he left for Washington and Baltimore.

It happened just as General Lyon had predicted.

Alexander, sulking at his apartments in one of the most fashionable hotels in the Capital, received the lawyer's visit and his uncle's letter.

He was immeasurably astonished at the announcement of his wife's inheritance of an enormous fortune. At first, indeed, he listened to the intelligence with scornful incredulity; but when convinced beyond all doubt of the truth, his amazement was unbounded. He had never before heard of the California billionaire, and could not now realize the fact that poor Drusilla was a great heiress. He scarcely succeeded in concealing from the lawyer the excess of his amazement. He was, literally, almost "stunned" by the news.

The lawyer's time was precious; so, barely giving Mr. Alexander a minute to recover his lost breath, and acting upon General Lyon's instructions he proposed to the husband to resign the whole of her newly-inherited wealth to his discarded wife.

Alexander arose, a proud disdain curling his lips and flashing from his eyes, and answered haughtily:

"Unquestionably, sir! Prepare the proper papers with your utmost despatch. I had intended to sail for Europe in Saturday's steamer, but I will forfeit my passage and wait here until these deeds shall be executed; for I could no more bear to hold an hour's interest in her inheritance than I could bear any other sort of ignominy. How soon can the documents be ready?"

Mr. Kent could not tell within a day or two—lawyers never can, you know. But he engaged to prepare them very early in the next week, in time for Mr. Lyon to embark upon his voyage on the following Saturday.

And so Lawyer Kent went on his way to Baltimore musing:

"He is a splendid fellow, and she is a sweet young creature; they are an admirable pair! What the mischief can have come between them?—ah, the devil, of course!"

Mr. Kent was as good as his word. On Tuesday morning, he placed the requisite deeds in the hands of Mr. Lyon, who, in the presence of several witnesses and before a notary-public, formally signed, sealed, and delivered them again into the custody of the lawyer.

And, on Thursday evening, Mr. Kent arrived at Old Lyon Hall, to announce the successful termination of the whole business, and to congratulate his client on her accession to one of the largest fortunes in America.

"And I think, my dear," whispered General Lyon to his protégée, "that you cannot better show your sense of these gentlemen's zeal in your cause than by making them your agents in the management of your financial affairs."

"I perfectly agree with you, my dear uncle. Tell them so, please," replied Drusilla.

And so it was arranged; and Mr. Kent went on his way rejoicing, "having made a good thing of it."

"And Alick has signed over to me all his material interest in my fortune! Well, I know he did not need any part of it; but he would have been welcome, oh, so heartily welcome, to the whole. At most, I only should have wanted enough to buy back dear Cedarwood," said Drusilla to her gossip, Anna, as they sat together in the nursery.

"He did right. How *could* he have done otherwise under the circumstances? Even *you*, with all your loving faith, must have despised him if, after forsaking you, he had taken any part of your fortune," said Anna.

Drusilla blushed intensely, at the bare supposition that her Alick could do anything to make her loyal heart despise him, and she answered warmly:

"But he did not do it! He would never do such a thing. If my Alick has ever erred it has been under the influence of some great passion amounting almost to madness! He would not do wrong in cold blood."

Anna did not gainsay her. Miss Lyon had quite given up arguing with the young wife on the subject of her husband's merits. If Drusilla had chosen to assert that Alexander was the wisest of sages, the bravest of heroes and the best of saints, Anna would not openly have differed with her. But now she turned the conversation from his merits to his movements.

"Alick sails for Europe to-morrow," she said.

"Yes, so Mr. Kent says. But do you know what steamer he goes in, Anna? Mr. Kent did not happen to name it, and I shrank from asking him."

"There is but one—the Erie. I suppose, of course, he goes on that. However, on Monday we shall get the New York papers, and then we can examine the list of passengers, and see if his name is among them," said Anna.

And with that answer the young wife had to rest satisfied.

CHAPTER VII.

HALCYON DAYS.

A course of days, composing happy weeks,
And they as happy months; the day is still
So like the last, as all so firm a pledge
Of a congenial future, that the wheels
Of pleasure move without the aid of hope.—WORDSWORTH.

VERY early on Monday morning Jacob Junior was dispatched to Saulsburg to meet the mail and fetch the papers. The messenger was so diligent that he brought in the bag and delivered it to his master while the family sat at breakfast.

There were no letters for anybody, but all the last Saturday's papers had come.

General Lyon distributed them. A New York evening journal fell to Anna's share. She turned immediately to look for the news of the outward bound steamers. She soon found what she was in search of. And as Alick's name was still a tacitly dropped word in the presence of her grandfather, she silently passed the paper to Drusilla, and pointed to the list of passengers for Liverpool who sailed by the Erie, from New York, on the Saturday previous.

Drusilla looked and read among them:

"*Mr. Alexander Lyon and two servants.*"

Drusilla nodded and smiled, saying in a low voice:

"It is better so, for the present. I hope that he will enjoy himself and come home in a happier frame of mind."

"Of whom are you speaking, my child?" inquired the General, raising his eyes from a report of the last great debate in the Senate.

"Of Alick. He sailed in the Erie for Liverpool on last Saturday," answered Drusilla, quite calmly.

"Ah! he did? Well, I think it about the best thing he could have done. I hope he will stay there until he comes to his senses. Joy go with him!" heartily exclaimed the old gentleman.

"Dear uncle!" pleaded Drusilla.

"Well, my dear, what now?" I said, "Joy go with him. That was a benediction, was it not?"

"I thought it was a sarcasm," said Drusilla, archly.

The General coughed slightly and returned to the perusal of the debate.

So Mr. Alexander had betaken himself to parts unknown, and Drusilla was by no means broken-hearted on that account.

All the tears she was ever destined to shed for him seemed already to have fallen; all the heart-aches she was ever to feel for him seemed already to have been suffered and forgotten.

Understand once for all that, though she loved him as faithfully and hoped in him as trustfully as ever, she no longer mourned his absence.

I repeat it—she could love forever and hope forever, but she could not grieve forever—not with her beautiful bright boy before her eyes.

It was delightful to see the young mother at this time of her life. She was the sunshine of that sweet old home. All the joyousness, hopefulness and truthfulness of childhood seemed to have returned to her; or, rather, as her own childhood had not been a particularly happy one, to have come to her for the first time with her child.

She sang in her nursing chair, or at her needle-work, all the morning; she sang at the piano, or the harp, or sang duets with Anna or Dick in the evening. She had a clear, sweet, elastic voice, a pure soprano, perfectly adapted to the bird-like carols that she most favored.

General Lyon, whose passion for music had survived all other enthusiasms, and had even increased with his declining years, seemed never to grow weary of her delicious notes.

This pleased Anna.

"Dear grandpa," she would often repeat, "I am so glad

you have her here; and will have her with you when Dick takes me away. It will be such a comfort to me to feel you are not lonesome."

"I don't know how that may be, my dear. The more I see of our darling, the more inclined I am to think that fellow will come to his senses and claim her from us before we are willing to resign her. And *then* what shall I do?" the old man once inquired, with a sigh.

And then Drusilla put her hand in his, and looked up in his eyes with all a daughter's devotion, and answered:

"Dear uncle, you sheltered me when I had not a friend in the world. You saved my life and my boy's life. You gave him your name, and gave us both a home. And I will never leave you alone, never—not even for *him* will I leave you, until Anna and Dick come home from their bridal tour to leave you no more."

"I know it, my child, I know it; I need no assurance from you to teach me how unselfish you are. But, my dear girl, do you think I would permit you to sacrifice your happiness for my sake? No, dear Drusilla, when our prodigal comes to himself and seeks your love again, you will be ready and eager to be reunited to him and you must go with him, although I should be left alone. And this for *your* happiness, which must not be sacrificed for me."

"Happiness? sacrificed? Oh, uncle! father, dear, dear friend! you do not know my heart. The happiness would be in staying with you to solace your solitude; the sacrifice would be in leaving you alone. I *could* not and *would* not do it, no, not even for my dear Alick. Nor would he wish it; for when he 'comes to himself,' as you say, he will come to his better, nobler self,—his just and true self."

"Ah! my darling, you have great faith in that man."

"Because I judge him by the whole tenor of his past life, and not by the last few months of moral insanity!"

"May Heaven justify your faith, my dear," replied the veteran.

Soon after the Christmas and New Year's festivities were over, Richard Hammond made a move towards terminating his visit. But poor Dick's nature was so perfectly transparent that every one knew it was a most re-

luctant move. General Lyon, Anna and Drusilla all knew that Dick was very desirous of staying at Old Lyon Hall, and they all felt that the "unlucky dog," would be much safer with his relations in the country than among his "friends" in the city. So when Dick at length named an early day in February for his departure, the General said:

"Nonsense, boy, stay where you are."

"I should be glad enough to stay," Dick frankly answered, "but you see I feel I am trespassing. Bless my soul and life, sir, I have been here nearly three months."

"What of that? Stay three years. Stay three centuries if you live so long. My boy, all counted, we are but four; not enough to crowd this big old house; not enough to fill it, or half fill it. So, if you find yourself at ease among us, remain with us."

"But you see, dear grandpa," said Anna, wickedly, "he is *not* at ease among us. He is very restless with us. He is longing to get back to the city. He is pining for the society of his esteemed friends—the gallant Captain Redding and the brave Lieutenant Harpe."

"Oh, Anna, Anna! that was bloodthirsty!" said Dick in a grieved and outraged manner.

"Then if that is not so, what is the attraction to the city, Dick?" laughed Anna.

"Nothing at all. You know that as well as I do."

Anna did know it, but for all that she answered maliciously:

"Then I can't think why you wish to leave us."

"I *don't* wish to leave you. I would much rather stay. I have been here so long, I might well suppose that I had worn out my welcome. But as you and uncle are kind enough to tell me that I have not, I *will* stay, and 'thank you too,' as the girl said to the boy that asked her to have him."

"And don't take it into your head again, Dick, that you are wearing out your welcome. When we get tired of you, Dick, I will take it upon myself to send you about your business."

"Very well, Anna. I hope you will do so."

In truth, Dick had enough to keep him in the neighborhood. Hammond House and Hammondville, forming the

greater portion of the landed estate he had recently inherited, lay within a few miles of Old Lyon Hall.

The whole place was now in charge of a resident bailiff who was instructed to put it in thorough repair for the reception of its new master. And these repairs were going on as fast as circumstances would permit.

The outdoor work was of course frequently suspended during the inclemency of the weather. But the house was filled with carpenters, plasterers, painters and paperhangers.

And it was well that Dick should occasionally ride there to overlook these workmen. The most careful instructions are not often carried out, under these circumstances, without the frequent presence of the master.

It was thought expedient also that Anna, whose home it would sometime be, should be taken into the counsels and accompany Dick in his visits of inspection to Hammond House. And whenever the weather permitted she went there with him.

Hammond House was not to be their permanent home, however. During the life of General Lyon, they were to live at Old Lyon Hall.

Three times a week, when the mail came into Saulsburg and the letters and papers were brought to Old Lyon Hall, Drusilla turned to the ship-news. At length she saw announced the safe arrival of the Erie at Liverpool. And then she knew that was the last of even indirect news she might hope to hear of Alexander.

But she was not depressed on that account. Her faith, hope and love were strong. Everybody was very good to her. Her baby boy was growing in strength, beauty and intelligence.

The spring was to be early this year. The latter days of February were bright and lovely harbingers of its quick approach.

In the finest hours of the finest days Drusilla took her baby out for short drives around the park—the nurse dragging the little carriage and the mother walking by its side, and Leo often following to open gates or remove obstacles.

There was not unfrequently a high dispute between the brother and sister as to who should take care of the baby

Leo insisted that as the baby was a boy, it was *his* right to have charge of him, and declared that he could see no fitness at all in a girl setting herself up to nurse a boy.

Pina retorted that such a thing as a male nurse never was heard of either for male or female child.

Leo would then bring forward his mistress's promise that he himself should have a good time with little Master Leonard, riding him about on his shoulder.

Pina would request him to give that piece of information to the "horse-marines," who might be credulous enough to believe his story. As for herself, she rejected it totally and held fast by her own rights as sole nurse by appointment of her mistress.

Through all these quarrels one fact was evident—the devotion of the brother and sister to the young child and his mother, of whom it might almost be said that their servants were ready to lay down their lives in their service.

Drusilla had not given up her favorite project of purchasing Cedarwood. She had written and instructed her attorneys to make overtures to the present proprietors of the place, for that purchase. She told them that she knew of course the people who had so recently purchased the property would want a very handsome bonus before they would consent to part with it again so soon; and that she was prepared to satisfy their demands, as she preferred to pay an exorbitant price for the place rather than miss its possession.

Her attorneys, who were long-headed men of business, in no way given to sentiment or extravagance, wrote in reply that they hoped with a little patience and good management to buy the estate at something like a fair valuation.

So Drusilla agreed to wait.

Meanwhile General Lyon had not forgotten that he had promised to purchase Cedarwood, and bestow it upon Drusilla as a New Year's present. And he also set about negotiating for his purpose.

This reached the ears of Drusilla's lawyers, who immediately wrote to ask her if she was aware that her uncle, also, was after the place.

Drusilla was not aware of the fact; but now that she heard of it, she of course understood that the General could only be seeking it for her sake.

So she went to the old gentleman and assured him that as much as she loved him, she could not possibly receive so magnificent a present from his hands, but very much desired to purchase the estate with her own funds.

General Lyon laughed, and assured her that his only motive in trying to buy Cedarwood was to keep his word to her; but that, if she released him from it, he was ready to give up the project. For he was well aware, he said, that to bestow property on a lady who owned warehouses piled with merchandise in Baltimore and San Francisco, and merchant ships at sea trading to all parts of the world, besides bank stock and railway shares in almost every State, and gold mines in California, to bestow a little bit of property on such a billionaire would simply be to send coals to Newcastle."

So the General wrote and stopped the proceedings of *his* lawyers.

And Drusilla wrote and told *hers* to go ahead as fast as they saw fit.

But it was April before any measure of importance was taken. Then Messrs. Heneage & Kent, who had been as active and as artful as detectives in the business, wrote to inform their client that they had discovered that the present proprietor of Cedarwood, who was a person of very restless disposition and unsettled habits, had become dissatisfied with the place and was anxious to dispose of it, and would do so immediately if he could sell it for as much as he gave for it. Now, as Alexander Lyon had sold the estate at some sacrifice during his fit of fury, it was therefore supposed to be a good bargain. The lawyers wrote to ask further instructions from their client.

Drusilla by return mail directed them to buy Cedarwood immediately, as her great desire was to possess it as soon as possible, on any terms. She also requested them to buy as much of the wooded land around Cedarwood as they could get at a reasonable, or even at a slightly unreasonable price, as she intended to improve the place as much as it would admit of, and wished, among other things, to have a little home park.

It was well for this young Fortunata that her attorneys had much more prudence than herself. They were not disposed to pay fancy prices for fancy places, even when they were spending their client's money instead of their own, and getting a good percentage on it. So they managed matters so well that, by the first of May, the whole business was successfully completed.

Cedarwood, with its original twenty-five acres of partially cleared land, was purchased for twenty thousand dollars, and one hundred acres of wild forest land lying all around it was purchased for thirty thousand—the whole property costing fifty thousand.

"A very excellent investment," wrote Heneage & Kent, "even as a mere country seat; but the land so near the city is rapidly rising in value; and when you may wish to do so in future years, you may divide it into half a hundred villa sites, and sell each part for as much money as you now pay for the whole."

But Drusilla was not thinking of land speculations, so she ran to her friends and, after telling them of the completion of the purchase of Cedarwood, she exclaimed:

"And now we shall have such a beautiful home near the city to receive us all when we go to Washington to spend the winter. It will be so much better than a hotel or boarding-house in the city. It is only half an hour's drive from the Capitol. We can live there so comfortable, and as quiet as we please when we wish to be so, and enter into all the amusements of the city we like when we wish to do so. It will only be to start half an hour earlier when we go to a party or a play, half an hour earlier from Cedarwood than we should from a hotel in the city, I mean. And then when we leave a brilliant ball-room or opera-house, it will be so pleasant to come to a sweet, quiet home in the woods, instead of a noisy, unwholesome hotel—don't you think so, dear uncle?" she said, appealing to the General.

"Yes, my darling, I do," answered the old gentleman.

"And shall you like the plan?"

"Very much, my dear child. I never could sleep well at any of the hotels in Washington or in any other city, for that matter. The noise of the carriages in the streets always kept me awake nearly all night."

"And you, Anna—shall you like it?"

"Of course I shall. I detest hotels. The clean face towels always smell sour or fetid, for one thing. And boarding houses and furnished lodgings are almost as bad."

"I am delighted! So in future I and my baby shall be *your* guests at Old Lyon Hall or at Hammond House during the summer, and you all shall be my guests at Cedarwood all the winter. And I shall write to 'mammy,' and offer her and her husband the situations of housekeeper and head gardener there, at liberal wages. And they would keep the house and grounds always in good order, and ready to receive us. Will not that be pleasant, Dick?"

"Pleasant!" exclaimed Mr. Hammond enthusiastically; "it will be perfectly delightful."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE END OF PROBATION.

From that day forth, in peace and joyous bliss,
They lived together long, without debate;
No private jars, nor spite of enemies,
Could shake the safe assurance of their state.—SPENSER.

BESIDES the natural geniality and sociability of his disposition, which always moved General Lyon to bring his friends and relations about him, there were other and even stronger motives that urged him to invite Richard Hammond to remain at Old Lyon Hall. The old gentleman wanted to save "the unlucky dog from his friends," and also he wanted to study him.

And as weeks and months of close companionship in the seclusion of the country house passed away, he *did* study him. And apparently the study was satisfactory.

All poor Dick's impulses were altogether good. Indeed, it was through the very goodness of his nature that he so often came to grief.

Dick could not bear to say No; and not only ever to his friends, but not even to his enemies, for his salvation,

Dick could not endure to inflict pain, not only ever upon good people but not even upon sinners. And these amiable traits in his character were used by evil-disposed people to his injury.

There was indeed so much of the woman in Dick's gentle and lively nature that very few women could have loved him as Anna did. But then there was enough of the man in Anna's nature to produce an equilibrium of the sexes in their union.

General Lyon noticed all this, and he noticed something else—namely, that though Dick and Anna certainly loved each other devotedly, they bore their probation with exemplary patience.

This touched the heart of the veteran, but still he would not shorten the time.

Moreover, he felt the infirmities of age creeping upon him, he knew that at his years life was extremely precarious, and he certainly wanted to see another generation of Lyons in lineal descent from himself before he should go home and be no more on earth.

Yet for all this he would not hasten the marriage of Dick and Anna.

Drusilla, with her quick perceptions and warm sympathies, read the hearts of all around, and wished to make them happy.

Like an artful little angel as she was, she chose her opportunity well.

It was a lovely day in the latter part of April, and General Lyon and herself were sitting alone together in a front parlor where windows opened upon a conservatory in full bloom.

Dick and Anna were gone on a visit of inspection of the works at Hammond House.

The General had little Leonard in his arms.

Drusilla was sewing beside them.

"Ah, my dear, you do not know how much this little fellow adds to my happiness!" he said.

"I am always so glad and grateful to hear you say that, dear uncle, and I hope little Leonard as he grows in intelligence will be more and more of a comfort to you," she replied; and then, after a little pause, she said:

"But if little Leonard, who is only my son, gives you

so much content, how much joy Anna's children will give you!"

"I don't know, my dear: and, besides, I may not live to see them."

"Dear uncle, you will live many years yet."

"I cannot hope to do that, my dear. I am past seventy. I have already lived out the threescore and ten years allotted as the natural term of a man's life."

"But, dear uncle, I think all nature teaches us that a CENTURY is the natural term of a man's life."

"A pleasant theory, my child. I wish it were a true one."

"But I think it is a true one."

"Why do you think so?"

"From analogy. All natural philosophers and historians who have made the nature and habits of the animal creation their study have agreed upon this fact; that all healthy animals, unless their lives are terminated by violence, live five times as long as it takes them to grow up. Now it takes the human animal twenty years at least to grow to maturity; therefore the human animal really should live five times twenty years, which makes a round hundred or a CENTURY; and I firmly believe it is intended for him to live that long, if he only acted in accordance with the laws of life and health. And, dear uncle, you seem always to have acted so, and therefore I think you may safely calculate upon living out your century and then dying the gentle death of mere old age."

"There is a certain reasonableness in your theory, my little philosopher."

"And there is a roundness and completeness in this full century of life which is so satisfactory," said Drusilla, heartily.

"Yes, my dear, especially to those who love this planet Earth, with all her failings, as I confess I do," smiled the old gentleman. "And besides, I would like to see Anna and Dick happily married, with a thriving family of boys and girls about their knees."

"Then, dear uncle, why not let them marry at once?" pleaded Drusilla.

"'Marry at once!' Drusilla, you astound me, child!" exclaimed the old gentleman, in unaffected astonishment.

"Yes, marry at once, dear uncle, and then, if you live to be as old as Methusaleh, you will still have only the longer time to witness their happiness," persisted Drusilla, who, now that she had "broken the ice," was determined to go through.

"But, my dear, I put Richard Hammond upon a probation of twelve months, and the time has not expired yet."

"It is very nearly half gone, though. Five months of the allotted term has passed away. There are seven months of penance remaining. Dear uncle, be kind to them and commute that to one month. Let them marry in May."

"Have they commissioned you to plead their cause, my dear?" gravely inquired General Lyon.

"Oh no, sir, they have not. And perhaps also you may think me very presumptuous and impertinent to meddle in the matter. If you do, I will beg your pardon and be silent."

"Nonsense, my dear child! I think nothing of the sort. Speak all your thoughts freely to me. They are good and true thoughts, I know, though they may not be very worldly wise. Come now, why should I shorten the probation of Dick?"

"Oh, because he has behaved so well. Indeed, dear uncle, if you really mean that Dick should marry Anna, I think that you had just as well let him marry her now as half a year hence. I believe Dick is as good now as he will ever be, or as any young man can be. Why do you insist on a probation? If Dick were playing a part in this good behavior, he could play it six months longer as well as he has played it six months past, for so great a stake as Anna's hand. But he is not playing a part. You know as well as I do that Dick is as frank, sincere and open-hearted as his best friend or worst enemy could desire him to be. He is not playing a part. His present steadiness is but an earnest of what his whole future life will be, with Anna by his side. Dear uncle, I really do think that all Dick's irregularities grew out of his banishment from Anna's society. He sought gay companions—or rather *no;* we are sure that he *never* sought them; but he allowed himself to fall into their company to find oblivion for his regrets. With the mere promise of Anna's hand,

you see he has dropped his disreputable friends altogether. With Anna for his wife, he will never be in danger of taking them up again."

"There is much reason in what you say, my dear," admitted General Lyon.

"And, besides," said Drusilla, dropping reason and resorting to sentiment, "it is such a *pity* not to make them happy when you have the power to do it."

"I will think of what you have advanced, my dear Drusilla," said the veteran, gravely. "But Lord bless my soul alive!" he added, elevating his eyebrows, "now I do think of it, the young man himself has not petitioned for a curtailment of his probation!"

"*Oh, uncle, has he not?* Not, not in set terms, perhaps, because you absolutely forbade him to resume the subject until the specified year should have terminated; and of course he felt, and still feels, bound to obey you. But has not his whole conduct for the last five months been a plea for the commutation of his sentence? Has not every word, look and act of his life here been a declaration of devotion to Anna, a prayer for mercy from you, and a promise of fidelity to both?"

"I cannot deny that."

"Then, dear uncle, let them marry at once. Oh, forgive my plain speech! for you know you told me to speak my thoughts freely."

"Certainly."

"Then let them marry at once."

"Is there no other reason you would like to urge why they should be made happy, as you express it, just now?"

"Oh, yes, dear sir; if you make them wait until the time of probation is out, it will bring the wedding to the middle of November—sad November, which is always gloomy enough in itself and is now doubly gloomy to us from its associations. Three times Anna's marriage has been appointed to take place in November, and three times it has been defeated—twice by death, and once—but we will say no more of that. Let us change the month and even the season, dear sir. Let the marriage come off in May—this next May. It is now beautiful spring—the best season in the year for a wedding and a wedding tour. Let them marry and go; and you and I

and little Leonard will stay here and have a good time this summer. In autumn they will return and join us again. And early in the winter we will all go up to Washington and live at Cedarwood during the season. Dear uncle, I do think you had better let them get their wedding tour over this summer. You will miss Anna very much less in summer than in winter."

"That is very true," said the General, reflectively.

"And you will let them marry in May?" eagerly inquired Drusilla

"Ah! I don't know. I cannot move in the matter unless the young gentleman does. I cannot fling my granddaughter at Mr. Dick Hammond's head!"

"Oh, uncle! how can you say such things? You know poor Dick is tongue-tied on that subject for the present, by your probation, as well as by his sense of honor. He *cannot* speak of this without your leave. But only give him leave by a glance, a nod, a hint, and he will be on his knees to you to grant his suit and shorten his probation," said Drusilla.

"Hem! Suppose you give the glance, nod, or hint, that may be required for the encouragement of this despairing lover?" proposed the General, archly.

"That I will, with all my heart and soul," replied Drusilla, warmly.

The next day at noon, while Drusilla was walking beside her baby's carriage out on the lawn, Dick, with his fishing rod over his back, sauntered up to her.

Drusilla dropped behind so as to let the carriage and the nurse get far enough ahead to be out of hearing, and then she said:

"Dick, I think if you will ask our uncle to release you from your promise of silence on a certain subject, that he will do so."

"Drusilla, do you really think he will? If I thought so, if I was sure he would not banish me at once from Anna's side, I would ask him this moment!" exclaimed Dick, his eyes dancing with eagerness.

"He will not banish you. Why should he? You will *break* no promise to him; you will only ask him if he sees fit to *release* you from your promise of silence on a certain subject. I think he will give you leave to speak on that

subject. And, furthermore, when you do speak, I think he will listen to you favorably."

"Oh, Drusilla! do you? Do you think so, indeed? If I thought so, I should be the luckiest dog and the happiest man in existence."

"Go try for yourself at once, Dick. He is in his study. He has just got through his morning papers, and is enjoying his pipe. The opportunity is highly auspicious. Go at once, Dick. You will never find him in a more favorable mood."

"I'm off this instant. Heaven bless you, Drusilla, and make you as happy as I hope to be," exclaimed Richard Hammond, dropping his fishing tackle, and dashing away to put his destiny to the test.

Drusilla hastened after her baby's carriage, overtook it, and continued to walk beside it, and guard it for more than an hour longer.

She had just turned with it towards the house when she was met by Dick, who was hastening to greet her.

"Oh, Drusa, Drusa, dear Drusa, it is all right now. And all through you! And I came to tell you so, and to thank you, even before I go to tell Anna!" exclaimed Dick, with his face all beaming with happiness.

And he seized and kissed Drusilla's hand, and then darted off again, in search of Anna.

And thus through Drusilla's intervention, was Richard Hammond's probation commuted, and the marriage of the lovers appointed to be celebrated about the middle of May.

Meanwhile Drusilla had written to "mammy," offering to her the situation of housekeeper, and to her husband that of head gardener at Cedarwood. She had directed her letter to the care of the Reverend Mr. Hopper, at Alexandria, feeling sure that it would by this means safely reach the hands of the nurse.

In due time Drusilla received an answer, badly written and worse spelt, yet sufficiently expressive of "mammy's," sentiments on the subject.

She thanked Mrs. Lyon from the bottom of her heart, and would gladly take the place and try to do her duty by the mistress. And likewise her old man. She never expected to have such a piece of good fortune come to her and her old man in the old ages of their lives. Which it

had just come in good time too, seeing as her last darter was agoing to marry and leave her and her old man alone. And besides, she herself was aged before her time, all along of spending all the days of her life in close, sick rooms. And she was mortially glad to leave the profession of sick nursin' to younger and stronger wimmin. Which she was fairly pining for the country, where her childhood and youth had been passed. She had never been able to get reconciled to the town, although she had lived into it for thirty-five years, and she loved to feed chickens and take care of cows, and make butter and cheese. And as for her old man, it was the delight of his life to hoe and rake, and plant and sow, and weed and trim gardens and vineyards, and sich like. And she was sure they would both be happier than they had ever been in all their lives before. And she prayed Heaven to bless the young madam who had taken such kind thoughts of them in their age, to insure them so much prosperity and pleasure.

CHAPTER IX.

A MAY-DAY MARRIAGE.

Be not amazed at life. 'Tis still
  The mode of God with His elect:
Their hopes exactly to fulfil,
  In times and ways they least expect.

Who marry as they choose, and choose
  Not as they ought, they mock the priest,
And leaving out obedience, lose
  The finest flavor of the feast.—ALFORD.

THE wedding-day of Dick and Anna was fixed for the fifteenth of May.

Then came consultations about the details of the festival. Should it *be* a festival?

Anna thought not. Her marriage had been so often appointed and so often arrested that she said it would be best taste now to get it over as quietly as possible. She and her betrothed, attended only by General Lyon and

Drusilla, would go to church and be married in their traveling-dresses, and start immediately on the wedding tour. Such was Anna's plan.

But General Lyon would not hear of such a thing. What! marry off his granddaughter and heiress to his nephew in such a semi-clandestine manner, as if he were half-ashamed of the proceeding? What, disappoint all the young people in the neighborhood, who had every right to expect a festival on the marriage of Miss Lyon, of Old Lyon Hall? Not while *he* was head of the family! Anna should be married at home. And there should be such a celebration of the nuptials as the lads and lasses around the hall should remember to the latest day of their lives.

Anna urged that in the middle of May the weather would be too warm for a ball.

General Lyon agreed that it would; but added that the weather would be delightful for a festival in the open air on the beautiful grounds of the manor; it would be neither too warm nor too cold, but exactly right for dancing on the lawn. The marriage ceremony he said should be performed in the great drawing-room, the wedding breakfast should be laid in the long dining-room; but the music and dancing should be enjoyed in the open air.

Anna laughingly appealed to Dick and to Drusilla to take her part against this decision of the General.

But Drusilla and Dick declined to interfere and remained conscientiously neutral.

So the will of the General carried the day.

This obstinacy of the old gentleman made it necessary that a great deal of business should be done, and done at once, as the time was so short to the wedding-day. Wedding cards must be printed and circulated. A new trousseau must be prepared. A sumptuous breakfast must be devised. Certain deeds must be executed.

In furtherance of these works, Dick first went up to Richmond to deal with lawyers and engravers.

And soon after his departure General Lyon and Anna went to Washington to negotiate with milliners and pastry cooks.

And Drusilla and her attendants remained in charge of Old Lyon Hall. She had been affectionately invited to accompany Anna and the General, but, though her baby

was now nearly six months old, she declined either to leave him at home or to take him on so long and rough a journey. She thought that her boy and herself were both better in the country. The General agreed with her, and so she was left in charge of the premises.

But though she sadly missed her friendly Anna, and fatherly old General, and gay Dick, yet her life when left at Old Lyon Hall was very different from what it had been when she was alone at Cedarwood.

Here in the old hall she was no longer lonesome and dreary. She had a plenty of company and of interesting employment. She had her darling boy and her attentive servants; and she had visitors from the neighborhood almost every day; for young Mrs. Alexander Lyon was growing in favor with the whole neighborhood.

Here she was not obliged to live a secret life. She would drive out in her carriage, with her baby and nurse, whenever she pleased. She could ride out on horseback attended by her young groom Leo, whenever she liked. She could return the calls of her country neighbors; she could accept their invitations to dinner or to tea, and she could receive and entertain them at home.

Here she enjoyed the largest liberty. General Lyon and Anna had both assured her that she would only make them happier by behaving in all respects as a daughter of the house, and using it as if it were her own. And Drusilla, convinced of their perfect sincerity, took them at their word.

Her sweet heart and social spirit took pleasure in this frequent intercourse with the country ladies and their little children. She liked to have a whole family, mother, children and nurses, to spend a long day with her at home; and almost as well she liked to take her boy and nurse and go and pass a whole day at the country house of some friend.

It was gratifying to her also, when her nearest neighbors, the Seymours, came over and spent an evening with her. There were but three persons in this family—old Colonel and Mrs. Seymour, and their youngest daughter Annie, or Nanny, as they called her.

Old Colonel Seymour was a passionate lover of music, and it was the one grievance of his life that his daughter

Nanny had no voice, and no ear, and never could learn to sing or play on the piano. He could never understand it, he said, how a girl born with the usual allowance of senses, with a quick pair of ears, and a nimble tongue, and who could hear as fast and talk much faster than anybody he ever saw, should pretend that she did not know one tune from another! She that was neither deaf, nor dumb, nor an idiot! It was an incomprehensible fact, but it was no less a great personal injury to himself.

But his one great delight was to come over to Old Lyon Hall in the evening, and hear Drusilla sing and play. Now, we know that her greatest gift was music. She sang with a passion and power equalled by no one in private circles, and excelled by but few in professional life. Honest Colonel Seymour had never in all his earthly experience had the privilege of hearing a great public singer. Therefore the performances of Drusilla affected, I might even say, overwhelmed him or transported him, with equal wonder and delight.

And Drusilla exerted herself hour after hour, and evening after evening, to please him, and took as much pleasure herself in the intense appreciation of her one single old adorer, as ever a great prima donna did in the applause of a whole world.

And the honest old gentleman's head was fairly turned with admiration and gratitude.

"To think," he said, as he walked home with his wife and daughter, one moonlight night, after spending an evening at Old Lyon Hall, "to think of having such a voice as that in the neighborhood! to think of being able to hear it several times a week, for the asking! Oh! it ought, indeed it ought, to raise the price of real estate in this locality! And it would do it, too, if people really could feel what good music is!"

"Papa," laughed the old wife, "you are an old gander. And if you were not gray and bald, and very good, I should be jealous."

"Oh, but mother, such strains! Oh, my Heavens, such divine strains!" he exclaimed, catching his breath in ecstasy.

"What will you do when your St. Cecilia leaves the neighborhood?" inquired his daughter.

"Leave the neighborhood! is she going to do that?" gasped the music-maniac.

"They are all going to Washington, next winter, she says."

"Then we'll—go too. I say, mother, *one* season in town, would not be amiss for Nanny; and so we can take her there next winter; and then I may swim and soar in celestial sounds every evening!"

"Papa, now you are too provoking, and *I* am jealous," said Nanny. "For my part, I don't like music any more than I do any other sort of racket. And I do think if there is one nuisance worse than another, it is a singing and playing lunatic, filling the whole room full of shrieks and crashes, just as if a thousand housemaids were smashing a million of dishes, and squalling together over the catastrophe!"

"Oh, child, child, what a misfortune for you to have been born deaf, as to your divine ears!" answered the old gentleman in tones of deep and sincere pity and regret.

"I'm sure, papa, I often wish I had been born deaf as to my bodily ears! I mean, when your divinity is shrieking and thrashing, and raising such a hullabaloo that I can't hear myself speak!" said Nanny.

"Ah! '*that* accounts for the milk in the cocoanut!' You can't hear yourself speak, and you prefer the sound of your own sweet voice to the music of the spheres!"

"If the music of the spheres is *that* sort of noise, I certainly do, papa."

"Thank Goodness, here we are at our own gate! And now we will drop the subject of music for the rest of the evening—Kitty, was the missing turkey-gobbler found?" inquired Mrs. Seymour of the girl who came to open the door.

"Yes'm."

"And did the maids finish their task of carding?"

"Yes'm."

"And did you keep the fire up in my room?"

"Yes'm."

"That is right. The evenings are real chilly and damp for the time of year. Come in."

And the careful wife and mother led the way into the house.

Richard Hammond was the first of the absentees to return to Old Lyon Hall. He came one afternoon, bringing with him a large packet of handsomely engraved wedding cards and a bundle of documents, all of which he placed in Drusilla's charge to be delivered to General Lyon on the General's arrival. Then he took leave of Drusilla, and went over to Hammond House to wait there until the return of his uncle and his betrothed.

Two days afterwards, General Lyon and Anna came home.

Anna was attended by a pair of dressmakers, and enriched with no end of finery.

General Lyon was followed by a French cook and his apprentices.

Richard Hammond came over to meet them, and consult over the latest improvements of the bridal programme.

And now the business of preparation was accelerated.

First, the wedding cards were sent out far and near. And the neighborhood, which was not prepared for the surprise, was electrified.

Next the dressmakers, with every skilful needle-woman among the housemaids to help them, were set to work on the trousseau. Of the many dresses that had been made up for Anna's marriage, the last November, most had never been worn and were now in their newest gloss; but they were not trimmed in the newest fashion, nor were they all suitable for summer wear; so those first dresses had to be altered and newly trimmed, and many new dresses suitable for the season had to be made up. This kept all the feminine hands in the house very busy for a week.

Drusilla's skill, and taste, and willingness to help made her an invaluable assistant.

Only a few days before the one set for the wedding was the new trousseau finished and packed up, and the new wedding dress and traveling dress completed and laid out.

And now carpenters and upholsterers were brought down from town, and the house and grounds were fitted up and decorated for the happy occasion.

The French cook and his assistants had the kitchen, the pantry, the cellar, the plate-closet, and the long dining-

room, to themselves, and were up to their linen caps in business.

"Well, it is a notable blessing that one cannot be bothered with this sort of thing very often, as one is not likely to be married more than half a dozen times in one's life," said Anna, who was, or affected to be, very much bored by all this bustle.

"Oh, I hope to Heaven, Anna, we may neither of us ever be married but once! I trust in the Lord, Anna, that we may live together to keep our golden wedding-day half a century hence," answered Dick, very devoutly.

For honest Dick was what the Widow Bedot would have called very much "solemnized" by the impending crisis in his fate.

"Blessed is the bride that the sun shines on." The day of days came at last—the auspicious fifteenth of May—clear, bright, warm, genial, with a light breeze playing a lively tune, to which all the green leaves danced in glee. All the flowers bloomed to decorate the scene—all the birds turned out to sing their congratulations! Never was seen such a rosery on the lawn; never was heard such a concert in the groves.

The brass band that arrived upon the scene as early as ten o'clock in the morning, was quite a superfluity. Anna sent out and ordered the men not to play until the birds should be silent. So they sat under the shade of the great oak trees, and had ale served out to them, in which they drank the health of the bridegroom and the bride, while they watched the train of carriages that were constantly coming up, bringing guests to the wedding feast Such was the scene on the shaded, flowery lawn.

Even more festive was the scene within the house.

All the windows of the great drawing-room were thrown open, letting in all the sunshine and the cool breeze of this bright May day. The walls were hung with festoons of fragrant flowers, and the large table in the centre was loaded with the splendid wedding presents to the bride.

It would take up too much time to tell of all these presents. You will find them fully described in the "*Valley Courier*" of that date. They consisted of the usual sort of offerings for these occasions—"sets" of dia-

monds, emeralds, rubies, pearls and other gems; "sets" of silver plate; "sets" of fine lace, et cetera.

But we must not omit to mention Drusilla's munificent offering to the bride. It was also a "set," a tea set of pure gold, whose exquisite workmanship was even of more value than its costly material.

The appearance of the long dining-room, with the table laid for the wedding breakfast, should have immortalized the French cook if he had not been immortalized before. Here, also, all the windows were thrown open to the light and air. It would never do, said "Monsieur le Chef," for people to be too warm while eating and drinking. Here, however, were no natural flowers. Their powerful odors, said "Monsieur," affected too much the delicious aromas of the viands. But the walls were decorated with artificial flowers, with paintings and gildings, and with mirrors that multiplied the splendors of the scene a thousandfold, and opened imaginary vistas into unending suites of splendid saloons on every side.

The breakfast table reached nearly the whole length of the long dining-room, and was multiplied by the mirrored walls into innumerable other tables on every hand. It was beautifully decorated and sumptuously loaded; every variety of flesh, fish, and fowl that was in season, dressed in the most delicate manner; every sort of rare and rich fruit and vegetable; wonderful pastries, creams, and ices; crystallized sweetmeats, cordials, wines, liquors, black and green teas, and coffee, such as only a Frenchman can make, were among the good things displayed to delight the palates of the guests.

On the second floor, the bed-chambers and dressing-rooms wore a gay and festive aspect. There also the windows were thrown open to the light and air, and shaded only by the beautiful green trees and flowering vines without. The beds and dressing-tables were freshly covered with snow-white drapery; and on each toilet-table were laid new ivory-handled brushes and combs, silver flagons of rare perfumery, porcelain pots of pomade; and about each room were every convenience, comfort and luxury that a guest could possibly require,—all provided by a thoughtful hospitality that was careful and considerate in its minutest details.

Early in the day these light, fragrant, and delightful chambers were filled with bevies of fair girls, who were giving the last effective touches to their own and to each other's gay festal dresses, and whose soft talk and silvery laughter made music all around.

They had need to hurry, too; for the hour fixed for the ceremony was high noon, and they must all be ready and in their places to see it.

The bride's chamber was the scene of the most interesting passages. There sat the bride, surrounded by her bride's-maids, and lovingly attended by Drusilla.

Anna's dress was a rich white honiton lace robe over a white silk skirt, made with a low bodice and short sleeves, both edged with narrow lace. On her neck and arms she wore a necklace and bracelets of diamonds; on her hair the wreath of orange blossoms; over her head and shoulders the deep bridal veil of lace to match her robe; on her delicate hands kid gloves as white as snow and soft as down. Her six bride's-maids were all dressed in white tulle, with wreaths of white moss-rose buds on their hair, and veils of white tulle.

On this auspicious day Drusilla, for the first time, entirely laid aside her mourning. She looked beautiful and blooming, in a dress of rose-colored moire-antique, made with a low bodice and short sleeves, trimmed with point lace. On her neck and arms she wore a necklace and bracelets of pearls; on her young matronly brow a wreath of half-open blush roses; on her bosom a bouquet of the same flowers.

For this day also her little Leonard was dressed in gala robes, and sent out upon the lawn in the arms of his nurse where he remained for the present, gazing with eyes wide open with astonishment and delight on the wonderful pageantry around him.

The marriage hour struck at length.

The last loitering guests heard it, and hurried downstairs to the drawing-room which was already crowded.

The bride and her maidens heard it, and began to smooth out the folds of their dresses, or touch the edges of their hair, and steal furtive glances at the mirrors to see that all was right before leaving the chamber and facing the hundreds of eyes in the drawing-room below.

Punctually as the last stroke of twelve sounded, the bridegroom and his attendants came to the door.

The procession was formed in the usual manner and passed down-stairs.

Two gentlemen friends who took upon themselves the office of marshals, opened a way through the crowd for the bridal cortège to enter.

On the rug stood the Rev. Dr. Barber, in his surplice, just as he had stood some six months before; but all the rest was changed now. That was a dark and stormy November night. This was a bright and beautiful May day.

The bridal party, with due decorum, took their places before the officiating minister. There was no let or hindrance now. The face of the blooming bride was as clearly seen as that of the happy bridegroom. Both parties responded clearly and distinctly to the questions of the clergyman. General Lyon, with smiling lips, but moist eyes, gave the bride away. And the ceremony proceeded and ended amid the prayers and blessings of the whole company.

Kisses and congratulations, tears and smiles followed and took up twice as much time as the preceding solemnity had.

Then, at length the company, headed by the two marshals, marched off to the breakfast room. The ladies were handed to the table, and the gentlemen waited in duteous attendance behind them.

And the feast began.

These ladies did not care so much about the fish, flesh, or fowl, delicately dressed as these edibles might be. So they were left almost untouched, for the benefit of the gentlemen who might come after. But the beautiful pyramids of pound cake, the snowy alps of frosted cream, the glittering glaciers of quivering jelly, the icebergs of frozen custard, the temples of crystallized sweetmeats and groves of sugared fruits were quickly demolished.

The bride's cake was cut up and distributed; the piece containing the prophetic ring falling to the lot of Nanny Seymour.

At the right moment the first groomsman arose and made a speech, which was heartily cheered, and proposed the health of—

"The bride and bridegroom," which was honored with bumpers of "CLIQUOT."

Then the bridegroom arose and returned thanks in another speech, which was also cheered; and he proposed the health of—

"Our honored host and relative, the venerable General Lyon," which was drank by all standing.

Then the veteran got up and in a few earnest words expressed his appreciation of the compliment and his esteem for his guests, and then he gave somebody else's health.

Colonel Seymour arose and proposed the health of—

"Our beautiful young friend, Mrs. Alexander Lyon. And it was honored with enthusiasm.

Then, some unlucky idiot had the mishap to rise and name—

"*Mr.* Alexander Lyon," tearfully adding—"'Though lost to sight, to memory dear.'"

And a panic fell upon all that part of the company who knew or suspected the state of the case with that interesting absentee.

But old General Lyon quickly dispelled the panic. Would that true gentleman suffer Drusilla's feelings to be wounded? No, indeed. He was the very first to fill his glass and rise to his feet. His example was followed by all present. And unworthy Alick's health was drank with the rest. And while the brave old man honored the toast with his lips, he prayed in his heart for the prodigal's reformation and return.

And oh! how Drusilla understood and loved and thanked him!

Other speeches were made and other toasts drank.

Then tea and coffee were handed around.

And one set of feasters gave way to another, like the flies in the fable of old.

The rising set immediately went out upon the lawn, where the brass band was in full play on their stand, and where quadrilles were performed upon the greensward.

The feasting in the house and the music and dancing on the lawn was kept up the whole of that bright May day, even to the going down of the sun.

Never before had the youth of the neighborhood had

such a surfeit of frolicking. They voted that a marriage in May weather, and by daylight, with unlimited dance music, greensward, sunshine and sweetmeats, was the most delightful thing in the world.

In the very height of the festivities, at about four o'clock in the afternoon, the bride, attended by Drusilla, slipped quietly away to her own chamber and changed her bridal robes and veil, for a traveling habit of silver gray Irish poplin, and a bonnet of gray drawn silk.

The traveling carriage had been quietly drawn up to the door where Richard Hammond waited to take away his bride, and General Lyon stood to bid farewell to his child.

When Anna was ready to go down, she turned and threw her arms around Drusilla's neck and burst into tears.

"Oh, Drusa!" she sobbed, "be good to my dear grandfather. Oh! love him, Drusa, for my sake! I was all he had left, and it must be so hard to give me up! Oh, Drusa, love him and pet him. He is old and almost childless. When I am gone, put little Leonard in his arms; it will comfort him; and stay with him as much as you can. It is so sad to be left alone in old age. But I know, my dear, you will do all you can to console him without my asking you."

"Indeed I will, dear Anna," said Drusilla, through her falling tears.

"I will not be gone long. I shall be back in three weeks at farthest. I do not like to leave him at his age. He is past seventy. His time may be short on earth. How can I tell? That was the reason why I would not go to Europe for my wedding tour. But oh, Drusilla, I did not know how much I loved my dear grandfather until this day. And to think that in the course of nature I *must* lose him some day, and may lose him soon," said Anna, weeping afresh.

"My darling Anna, your grandfather is a very strong and hale old man; his habits are regular and temperate, and his life quiet and wholesome He is likely to live twenty or thirty years longer," answered Drusilla, cheerily.

"Heaven grant it," fervently breathed Anna.

And then she turned and went down-stairs, followed by Drusilla.

"Good-by, my darling. I will kiss you here. I must save the last one for my dear grandfather," said Anna, embracing her friend at the foot of the stairs.

"Good-by, and Heaven bless you!" responded Drusilla, heartily.

Anna went forward to General Lyon, who took her in his arms, and smiling, kissed and blessed her. And his last words, as he gave her into the charge of her husband, were cheerful:

"You will have a delightful run by moonlight up the bay, my dear," he said.

Anna, striving to keep back her tears, let Dick lead her to the carriage, and place her in it. He immediately followed, and seated himself by her side. Old Jacob cracked his whip, and the horses started.

So quickly and quietly had this little scene passed, that the carriage was bowling along the avenue before the company on the lawn suspected what was being done.

Then, eager whispers of:

"The bride is going! the bride is going!" ran through the crowd.

And quadrilles were suddenly broken up, and dancers came flocking to the door, knowing that they were too late to bid her good-by, yet still exclaiming to each other:

"The bride is going! the bride is going!"

"The bride is *gone*, my dear young friends," said General Lyon, kindly, "but she leaves me to make her adieus, and to pray you not to let her departure interrupt your enjoyment. The bride and bridegroom have to meet the Washington steamer that passes the Stormy Petrel landing at about nine o'clock. Now, 'on with the dance!'"

And the young folks immediately took the old gentleman at his word, and the music struck up, and the dancing recommenced.

And so Anna and Dick departed for Washington city on their way to New York.

Much discussion had been held on the subject of that marriage tour. Many suggestions had been made. Europe had been mentioned. But Anna had scouted *that* idea.

"None but a lunatic," she had said, "would ever think of taking a sea voyage, and risking sea-sickness in the honeymoon."

And for her part she positively declined putting Dick's love to so severe a test in the earliest days of their married life.

Such had been Anna's outspoken objection to the trip to Europe. But her secret objection was that it would take her too far and keep her too long from her beloved and venerable grandfather. So at last it had been settled to the satisfaction of all parties that they should make a tour of the Northern cities. And now they had gone.

But the wedding guests remained. The music and the dancing were kept up without flagging until the sun set, and the darkness and dampness of the night had come on.

Then the two self-appointed "marshals of the day" took upon themselves to pay and discharge the brass band.

The company soon followed the musicians, and old Lyon Hall was once more left to peace and quietness.

CHAPTER X.

GENERAL LYON'S CONSOLATION.

In this dim world of clouding cares
We rarely know till wildered eyes
See white wings lessening up the skies
The angels with us unawares!—MASSETT.

AFTER the last guests were gone, the house was very quiet.

General Lyon went up to his study.

Drusilla lingered a little while below to give orders to the servants.

"Close up all the rooms on this floor now. Disturb nothing until morning. I wish everything to be kept very still so that the General may rest and recover from the fatigue of this exciting day. Marcy, have the tea served in my sitting room. Leo, do you be up early in the morning and see that the breakfast parlor—the little

one—is made very tidy before we come down. The other rooms had best be left closed until the General goes for his daily ride. Then they can be restored to order."

Having thus given her directions to ensure the comfort of the old gentleman, Drusilla went up into the nursery where her little Leonard was laughing, crowing and screaming in his nurse's arms.

"I do think as he's beside himself, ma'am," said Pina. "He'll never get over this wedding as long as he lives. When I had him out on the lawn there, and the band was playing and the ladies and gentlemen were dancing, he jumped so as I could hardly keep him from leaping out of my arms."

"He did enjoy it as much as any of us, didn't he, Pina?" said the young mother, standing and smiling over the nurse and child.

"Oh, didn't he though, ma'am? Look at him now; it's in him yet! And such a time I had bringing him in the house. He did not want to come in at all, even after the music went away. He didn't cry, ma'am, but he made such signs, and then he fought. Yes, indeed he did, ma'am, he fought me in the face because I brought him in."

"Why, Pina, I can hardly believe it!"

"But, you may, ma'am! Oh, he's got a will of his own, I do tell you! I couldn't make my peace with him until I had lighted all the wax candles in the place! See what an illumination there is, ma'am! Enough to blind any body but a boy baby. And such work to get him undressed. He wouldn't have his finery off forever so long. He wanted to dance in it. And then, after I had loosened it and got it off little by little with sheer conjuration, would you believe it, ma'am? he wanted to dance in his sacred skin, like a North-American Indian! I have got his nightgown on at last; though *how* I ever got it on with his prancing and dancing, goodness knows. But, as for his little red shoes, I'll defy mortial man or woman to get *them* off his feet except by main force! When I try to do it he kicks so fast you would think there were nineteen pair of feet in nineteen pair of boots instead of one!"

"Lenny will let his mammy take off his boots," said

Drusilla, kneeling by the baby's feet and making an essay.

Lenny would let his mamma do a great many things to him, but he would by no means let her remove his red shoes. His little legs flew so fast in resistance that you could not have told one from the other.

"He means never to part with them, ma'am," laughed Pina.

"We can take them off when he goes to sleep," smiled Drusilla.

"But there's no sleep in his eyes, ma'am, nor won't be for hours! He'll keep awake to watch his boots and to dance! Goodness gracious me! My arms are almost pulled out of their sockets holding him while he dances."

"I will take him presently, Pina, as soon as I change my dress," said Drusilla.

And she went and took off her wreath of roses, her necklace and bracelets of pearl, and her rich moire antique dress; and put on a neat white muslin wrapper, whose pure color and perfect fit became her well.

Then she took her dancing babe; but not to put him to sleep just yet. Little Master Leonard had a duty to do before he could be put to bed. She carried him into the next room, which was her own pretty private parlor.

The room was very inviting. A small, cheerful wood fire, very acceptable this chilly May evening, was blazing on the hearth.

The tea-table with its snowy, damask cloth, its silver service and clear China, was standing before the fireplace.

A large easy chair, with a foot cushion was drawn up on the right side; and Drusilla's own little sewing chair was on the left.

Marcy was in attendance.

"This is all quite right. Now do you wait here until I bring the General in, and then you can serve tea," said Drusilla, as with her baby in her arms she passed out into the hall and on towards General Lyon's study.

She opened the door.

The little room was dark and chill, but the lights from the hall shone in, and revealed to her the form of the old

man, seated at the writing table, with his arms folded on it, and his head bowed down upon them. It was an attitude of depression, of sleep or of death.

Of death! a dread pang seized her heart, and held her spell-bound in the doorway as she gazed on him. He had not heard her approach. He was not disturbed by the inflow of light. He remained, indeed, as still as death!

She was afraid to stir, almost to breathe! She had heard of old men dying just so! Oh, had not his own brother, his *youngest* brother, died that way not three years since?—died sitting in his chair by his Christmas fire, surrounded by his whole family and friends? died with nothing on earth to provoke death? died from no excitement no grief, no disease apparently?"

And here was the elder brother, a man of like constitution, who had been severely tried this day by the parting from his beloved and only surviving child, and now had come away to this chill, dark room, and had sat in solitude for an hour or more!

Drusilla's conscience smote her terribly for what she called the false and fatal delicacy that had prevented her from following him immediately to his retreat.

"Oh! if he should be dead, dead alone in this bleak room, she would never forgive herself, though she had done all for the best.

All these thoughts and feelings flashed like lightning through her brain and heart in the moment that she stood panic-stricken in the door.

Then full of awe, scarcely breathing, she crept near him, laid her hand upon his shoulder, and murmured softly:

"Uncle."

"My darling," responded the old man, looking up with a smile.

"Thank Heaven!" fervently aspirated Drusilla.

"What is the matter, my darling? What troubles you?" gently questioned the old gentleman, perceiving her alarm.

"I—I found you sitting here in the cold and dark, and I feared that something ailed you. Nothing does?"

"Nothing, my child, except a little natural but unwise regret. Certainly, she had to marry. It is a woman's

destiny. And it is so well that in marrying she will not have to leave me. Still, still I feel it, darling. She was all I had left in the world."

"She will be back in three weeks, dear uncle; back so soon that we shall scarcely have time to get the house set in order again for her reception. And now will you look at little Lenny? He has come to bid you good-night, and to ask you to come and take tea with his mamma," said Drusilla, seating the boy on the old man's knee.

By no manner of baby-babble could little Leonard possibly bid his godfather good-night, or invite him to tea; but he *would* put his little arms around the veteran's neck, and press his lips to the veteran's mouth, and laugh, and own his love and joy.

"Ah! may heaven forgive me for being so forgetful, so ungrateful as to say that I had no one but my Anna left me in the world, when I have little Lenny and his dear mother," said the old man, pressing the child to his bosom, and drawing Drusilla to his side. But oh! my dear, you know how it is—how it always has been, and always will be with poor human nature in all such cases. The shepherd of the Scripture parable. He thought not of his ninety and nine sheep, safe in the fold, but he mourned for the one lost."

"But Anna is not lost to you, dear uncle. She is only lost to sight, and that only for a little while. Think, dear uncle, in the marriage of Anna and Dick you have not lost a daughter, but gained a son."

"That is true, my dear."

"Think how devoted they are to you. They are as loyal to you as subjects to a sovereign."

"I know—I know."

"They will never leave you unless you send them away."

"I know; I see what a morbid old fellow I have been."

"No, no, not so, I think. Surely it is very natural that you should have such feelings; but it is also very desirable that you should rally from them."

"And I will, my dear, I will."

Little Leonard, fatigued by his former exertions, and perhaps also a little awed by the solemnity of the discourse, had remained still for at least three minutes.

But now he recommenced to prance and dance and express his impatience in every possible way that a baby of six months old could.

"You are almost too much for my stiff old arms, little fellow!" smiled the General, as he supported the leaping baby.

"Come, let us go to my room and have some tea," said Drusilla, rising and leading the way, followed by the old man with the child over his shoulder.

"This is snug, this is cozy, this is really very comfortable indeed," said the General, as he followed Drusilla into the pretty, cheerful sitting-room and saw the bright fire and the neat tea-table.

"Yes, this is pleasant after our day of excitement. Now kiss little Leonard good-night and let him go to sleep," said Drusilla, as she rang her little silver hand-bell.

Pina came in to take little Leonard, who leaped to meet her arms, for he was very fond of her.

General Lyon pressed the babe to his bosom and kissed him fondly, and then handed him over to his nurse, who bore him off to the nursery.

Then Marcy came in with the tea urn.

Drusilla made tea for the old gentleman.

The sound of Pina's rocking-chair and cradle-song came soothingly to their ears, as to the child's for which they were intended.

"This is very sweet and peaceful, dear, and I thank you for it all," said the General, softly smiling.

"No, but, dear uncle, it is all your own; and it is I who should thank you for the happiness of sharing it," quietly replied Drusilla.

"No, no, no," said the General, shaking his head.

"Yes, yes, yes," laughed the little lady.

They lingered long over that quiet, pleasant tea; and then, after she had rang for a servant, and had the table cleared, she went to the piano and sang and played to the old gentleman for an hour or more.

She sang all her favorite comic songs, but carefully eschewed the sentimental ones; for she wished to raise his spirits and not to melt his heart. Towards the last of her singing he came and stood behind her; and although he did not know enough of the notes to turn the pages for her

at the proper moment, he stood and beat time to the music and sometimes joined in the chorus.

At last, when she thought he had had enough of it, she arose and closed the piano.

Then, after an interval of a few minutes, she took her Bible and laid it on the table before him.

He bowed his head, opened it and read a chapter aloud And then they two joined in offering up their evening worship.

"Well, my darling," said General Lyon, as he arose to bid her good-night, "I have to thank you for much comfort. This first evening that I dreaded so much has passed off very pleasantly. God bless you, my child." And so he withdrew from the room.

Drusilla sat on for a little while gazing dreamily into the fire, and then she also retired to rest, drawing her sleeping infant to her bosom.

Very early the next morning Drusilla arose, dressed and went down-stairs to make sure that one room at least of all that had been thrown into confusion by the wedding should now be in order for the General's breakfast.

She found that Leo had followed her directions, and the small breakfast parlor, that occupied an angle of the house and had windows opening to the east and south, was prepared for the morning meal.

And the doors of all the disordered rooms were closed.

She went out and gathered a bouquet of early spring flowers and put them in a vase and placed them on the breakfast table.

And then she plucked a few young buds of mint and made an exquisite julep, and sent it up by Leo to her uncle's room.

Jacob, who had been sent at sunrise to the post-office, now returned. And Drusilla opened the mail-bag, which was found to contain nothing but newspapers, which she folded and laid by the side of her uncle's plate.

And then she sat down to await his coming.

He came at last, smiling on her as he entered, and took his seat at the table.

"You are the angel of the house, my child," he said—"the angel of the house! What should I do now but for you!"

"Dear uncle, what should *I* do without *you?* What should I have done that dreadful night but for your sustaining arm? All my puny efforts to serve you can never cancel that debt. I shall never forget that night," earnestly answered Drusilla.

"I shall never forget that night, Drusilla, for it was then I received—'an angel unawares.'"

She could not reply to these words, but blushed so intensely that the old man forbore farther praise, and merely saying:

"But it does not become you and me to compliment one another, my darling," he took up his newspaper.

Upon the whole, this was a very cheerful breakfast. When it was over, the old gentleman ordered his horse, and went for his daily ride.

Drusilla took advantage of his absence to set all the servants briskly to work to open the closed rooms, and clear away the debris of yesterday's great festival, so that by the time he should return the whole house should be restored to order.

The abundant remains of the feast were distributed to the poor around.

Moreover, she sent a note to the Seymours, asking them to come and spend the evening. And the messenger that carried it brought back their acceptance of the invitation.

Drusilla and her uncle dined tête-à-tête.

In the evening the Seymours came according to agreement; and Drusilla gave them music. They stayed till ten o'clock, and then took leave.

"No wonder that old comrade of mine should go mad over your music, my darling. I am not a music-maniac myself, generally, but I am always profoundly affected by yours," said the General, when they were gone.

Again Drusilla blushed deeply under the praise, but then recovering herself with a light laugh, she answered:

"Why, you see, uncle, I think this is the way of it. You and the Colonel inspire me. Such appreciating hearers as yourself and your friend must necessarily inspire even the very poorest performer to do her very best."

"Tut, tut, tut, my child; you know better! But, there, I will say no more on that subject! Good night, my darling," he said.

And so closed the first dreaded day of Anna's absence. And all the succeeding days were quite as pleasant.

Drusilla would not let her old friend be lonesome. She planned visits for him and herself to his favorite houses; and she invited his favorite friends to dinner or to tea. She often accompanied the old man on his morning rides, her gentle white mare ambling by the side of his steady old horse. She often invited him to take a seat in the open carriage when she went out in the afternoon to give her little boy an airing.

And she played and sang indefatigably to please Colonel Seymour, so that he might come over every evening, "rain or shine," to keep her uncle company.

Anna's and Dick's letters came two or three in a week. They were not very long, for they were written *en route;* but they were interesting and affectionate. They were filled with graphic sketches of their journey, and with warm expressions of tenderness for the "dear ones at home," and messages of kind regard to good friends around. The bride and groom were moving rapidly from point to point along the Canadian frontier, so that in answering them the General and his niece had to direct their letters a few stages in advance of the travelers. As, for instance, the answer of a letter post-marked Lewisburg, would be directed to Montreal.

Thus, through one happy divertisement or another, but chiefly through Drusilla's affectionate solicitude the "days of absence" slipped imperceptibly away; they had now brought the close of the last week of the honeymoon. The travelers were expected home on Saturday evening, and the house was in perfect order and beauty to receive the wedded pair.

CHAPTER XI.

A JOYOUS MEETING IN JUNE.

June with its roses, June
The gladdest month in the capricious year,
With its thick foliage and its sunlight clear,
And with a drowsy tune,
Of the bright, leaping waters as they pass
Laughingly on amid the springing grass.

ANNA and Dick returned rather sooner than they were expected; but not sooner than Old Lyon Hall was ready. and its inmates anxious to receive them.

On Saturday morning, while General Lyon, Drusilla and little Leonard with his nurse, were all out on the lawn enjoying the splendor of the early June day, before breakfast the wagon from the Foaming Tankard was seen approaching the house.

"What can that mean?" inquired the old gentleman, looking at it, as it rumbled on towards the house.

"Perhaps Anna and Dick to disencumber themselves, have sent the luggage on in advance," suggested Drusilla.

"But, as they are to come down by to-day's boat that would scarcely be worth while," reflected the old gentleman.

While they were discussing the question, the wagon, instead of going round to the servants' entrance as it would have done had it contained only luggage, rattled up to the front of the house.

And the instant it stopped, Anna jumped out, and ran to her grandfather, who caught her in his arms.

"My darling daughter,—my darling, darling daughter, I am so delighted to see you," he exclaimed over and over again, as he pressed her to his heart, while she answered him only with smiles and kisses, and both forgot that anybody else was waiting to be noticed.

Meanwhile, Dick was shaking hands with Drusilla, and chirping to little Leonard, and pulling rattles and whistles and dancing jacks out of his pocket, and in his eagerness doing everything at the same time.

"Let me look in your face, dear child," said the old man,

taking the bride's head between his hands, and gazing wistfully into her tearful but laughing eyes; "are you happy, my Anna?"

"Yes, dear grandpa," said Anna, earnestly, as her eyes overflowed.

"Quite happy?" anxiously persisted the veteran.

"Well—no," answered Anna, laughing, and making a face, "perfect bliss is not the boon of mortals, I believe. And, to tell the truth, I have a *corn* that troubles me, to say nothing of the slightest possible twing of neuralgia caught on the boat last night—moon-gazing."

"Oh, you came on the night boat?"

"Yes; our first plan was to stop in the city last night, but we remembered our pleasant trip on the water by moonlight when we left here four weeks ago, and as the moon was full, we thought we would come down again by moonlight, and then, too, we thought it would be so much pleasanter to reach home this morning, in time to breakfast with you, and have the whole day before us for reunion, than to get here late to-night, too tired to walk or do anything else but get supper and go to bed. Don't you agree with me that it was best to come home now,—just now?"

"Yes, my darling, that I do," answered the General, heartily; "but I am sorry you have got neuralgia."

Anna looked at him, quizzically.

"I am not quite sure that I have got it, or ever had it; but I am quite certain about the corn. Now, ain't you going to speak to Dick?"

"Dick! Certainly; how do you do, my dear boy? A hundred welcomes home!" exclaimed the General, releasing Anna from his embrace, and turning to greet the "unlucky dog."

Dick was then in the act of tossing his godson high in his arms, until he made him laugh and crow aloud, and then looking him solemnly in the face, and saying:

"I am your godfather, sir. Treat me with more respect, and don't be taking me for your equals!"

Now he turned his bright face, and held out his eager hand to receive his uncle's clasp, saying:

"I am very glad to get home, sir, and gladder still to see you."

Anna had gone to embrace Drusilla.

"How happy I am to see you again!" she said.

"And I you," answered Drusa, smiling.

"How well you are looking, dear!" exclaimed each to the other, speaking simultaneously.

"And now, Dick, give me little Leonard; I want to look at him! Remember, sir, if you *are* his godfather, I am his godmother, and have my rights. Don't be trying to exercise man's usurped prerogative by 'claiming the child,'" said Anna, holding out her hands for the boy.

"I shall never attempt to assert man's prerogative against woman's rights," laughed Dick placing the child in her arms, and then going to pay and dismiss the wagon which was now unloaded of all the luggage it had brought, and was ready to go.

"Bless my soul! Anna, my dear, how came you to return by such a very rude and primitive conveyance as that?" inquired the General, as the great old wagon rattled and rumbled past on its way back.

"Couldn't get any other, dear grandpa! The 'Foaming Tankard' don't boast a carriage of any description except this."

"If I had only known, I could have sent the coach to meet you. I should have sent it anyway this afternoon."

"But you wouldn't have had me to wait till the afternoon for it, dear grandpa?" laughed Anna.

"Oh, no, no, no! by no means! Only, if I had but known, I could have so easily sent it. Such a conveyance for a lady to come in!" exclaimed the old gentleman, as he gazed after the retreating wagon that rather jumped and bounced along than rolled.

"It was delightful! It was better than a hard trotting-horse! I like to be tossed as much as Master Leonard himself does! It has given me such a shaking up and such an appetite for breakfast as I never had before! I am famished, grandpa!"

"Oh, exactly! exactly! so you must be! Drusa! Drusa, my dear!" exclaimed the old gentleman, looking around for his young volunteer housekeeper.

But Drusilla had already vanished within to give her orders.

"And now, dear grandpa, I will go to my room to

change my dress. I presume it is ready for me, and I know where to find it. Dick, see that the luggage is sent up," said Anna, turning to go into the house.

But she was met at the door by all the household servants, who had learned her arrival from Drusilla and had come out to welcome her.

Hands were shaken and good-wishes heartily offered and warmly received, and then Anna passed on to her apartment.

In less than half an hour she hurried down-stairs, looking fresh and blooming in her white muslin dress with blue ribbons.

The family were waiting for her in the breakfast room, and as soon as she entered she was greeted again and seated in the pleasantest seat at the table.

All the windows were open, and all the brightness, beauty, fragrance, and music of June filled the place. The morning sunshine played upon every polished point; the fresh breeze danced with every fold of drapery; the aroma of the clove pink, the cape jessamine, the tea rose, the clematis, and the heliotrope perfumed the air. Humming-birds flitted about like winged flowers. And the song of the thrush in the sweet-briar bush was echoed by the mocking-bird from the acacia tree!

"What a beautiful morning! And what a beautiful scene! In all our travels, grandpa, we did not see so sweet an old home as this!" said Anna enthusiastically.

"I am glad you think so, my dear; but great allowance must be made for your natural attachment to your birthplace," smiled the General, as he sipped his coffee.

"Now, Drusilla, what do you say?" inquired Anna, appealing to her friend.

"I have not seen very much of the world to compare this with other places; but still, I think you are right, Anna. It is a 'sweet old home.' It is perfectly beautiful, and besides it seems to me that every one who was ever born here, or ever lived and died here, must have been very good and loving, that their spirits still pervade the place, and make it holy," said Drusilla, warmly.

"My dear, you will make me so much in love with my home that I shall not like to grow old and die and leave it," said the General, smiling.

"Dear uncle, please to believe that there is not the slightest necessity for you to grow old, much less to die before your century is completed. And if you do so I shall think that you will be treating your loving children very badly," said Drusilla.

"My dear!"

"Yes, I *do*. I think the deaths of most people who die, come of their indifference to the power that the Lord has given them of living on. Now, I think that you have the power to live on in the full possession of all your faculties to the age of one hundred years at the very least, and how much longer I don't know. And I shall take it very hard of you, if you don't do it, uncle."

"Hem; I shall try to oblige you, my dear," said the General, dryly.

"I hope you will! for you know I expect you to live to see your namesake, Leonard Lyon, junior, a bishop, a judge or a general, (whichever he shall please to be, for it will depend upon his choice of a profession,) or even President of the United States. The highest position is open to competition and you cannot tell what he may be yet; you must live to see."

"Do you intend to live your century out, Drusilla?"

"If it please Providence, yes; for I shall try to preserve the gift of life he has given me. And when I shall be a hundred years old, my little Leonard will be eighty-four, and a wigged chief-justice, or a mitred archbishop or something equally exalted. And I should not wonder if you should be alive and merry then."

"Oh, tut, tut, tut! you are laughing at me, little Drusa!"

"Heaven forbid! People enough have lived to be a hundred and forty. Henry Jenkins lived to be a hundred and sixty-nine, and even then he did not die from old age, or from disease, but from sheer imprudence, I might say accident, such as would have killed any man at any age."

"My dear niece, that case was a highly exceptional one."

"Well, and why shouldn't you make your own case a highly exceptional one?"

"My dear, you are extravagant."

"Well, maybe I am, in talking about a hundred and sixty-nine years; but I do positively insist upon your living a full century. That is only fair."

"My darling, our prayers should be not so much for a *long* life as for a *good* life."

"I stand corrected," said Drusilla, reverently; "but for all that I insist upon the century; for I think it was the Lord's design that man should live so long."

"Let me live so long as my life can be of use to others and no longer," said the veteran.

"Your life is of use to others as long as it gives happiness to others, and therefore I insist upon the century," persisted Drusilla.

"Well, my dear, I have no particular objection," laughed the General, as they all arose from the table.

Then came the healthful walk around the grounds, the General with his darling granddaughter hanging on his arm, and Dick and Drusilla, and the nurse with the baby, sauntering along promiscuously.

During this walk Anna gave her grandfather a very sprightly and entertaining description of her journey; and in return he told her how he and Drusilla had passed their time at home.

Dick amused Drusilla with spirited sketches of travel.

When the windings of their walk brought them around home again, Dick proposed a drive through the forest to Hammond House to see the progress of the works there that must, he thought, be now near their completion.

And as all assented to the proposition, the General ordered the large six-seated family carriage; and the whole party, including little Leonard and his nurse, started for a long drive through the summer woods to Hammond House.

It was but twelve o'clock noon when they reached the house—an old mansion standing upon a high headland at the junction of Wild River with the Upper Potomac.

The woods grew up to the very garden wall and clustered thick about it.

There were mountain brooks in the neighborhood, running down to the Wild River and swelling its stream before it fell into the Potomac.

The trout fisheries there were considered very fine in

their season. And it was a part of the family programme for coming years to spend the fishing season at Hammond.

It was now the beginning of the trout fishing season, and so the General and Dick, having seen Drusilla and Anna safely in the house, procured fishing tackle from Byles, the overseer, and went down to one of the bright, gravelly-bedded streams to fish.

Anna and Drusilla, with the babe and nurse, were taken by Mrs. Byles to a clean and airy bedroom, where they laid off their bonnets and sat down to rest.

The house was not yet in order; nor could it be said to be in disorder—the papering, painting, glazing and gilding were all completed; but the handsome new furniture remained in its packing cases, and encumbered halls and passages.

Overseer Byles and his wife occupied rooms in a wing of the building during the progress of the repairs; but they were to move to a neighboring cottage as soon as the house should be ready to receive the family.

Our party spent a very pleasant day at Hammond House.

Drusilla and Anna, with the baby and the nurse, wandered about the grounds and along the banks of the river until they were tired, and then they sat down under the trees to rest and to talk.

About two o'clock General Lyon and Dick returned from the trout stream well laden with spoil.

They gave the fish to Mrs. Byles, with a request that she would have them dressed for their dinner, and have the table set out in the open air between three broad oak trees where the shade was thickest.

At four o'clock they were called to dinner—a sylvan repast served *al fresco*.

There were trout, roast lamb with mint sauce, and green peas, potatoes and lettuce, and for dessert cherries, strawberries and ice-cream. That was all.

"But if I had known in time that you were coming, ladies and gentlemen, I would have got up something more acceptable," said the housekeeper, apologetically.

"I defy you to have done that, Mrs. Byles. Your dinner is excellent," replied the General. And all the

other members of the party agreed with him, and proved their sincerity upon the edibles set before them.

Immediately after dinner they were served with excellent coffee and tea.

Then the General ordered the carriage for their return home.

After another pleasant ride through the forest, they reached Old Lyon Hall at sunset.

"We have had a delightful day at your other house, Dick," said the General, heartily.

"*Our* other home, sir, if you please; for if Anna and myself are to be at home at Old Lyon Hall during one period of the year, you and Drusilla must be at home at Hammond House during another part," said Dick.

"And when you wish to spend a winter in Washington you must all be at home with me at Cedarwood," added Drusilla.

"Agreed! agreed!" said General Lyon, Anna and Dick in a breath.

After tea that evening they were pleasantly surprised by a visit from the Seymours.

It seems the old gentleman had got news of Anna's arrival and had come over with his wife and daughter, ostensibly to welcome home the bride and bridegroom; but really too glad of a good excuse to hear Drusilla sing and play.

They spent a long evening; and Drusilla gratified her old admirer with some very choice music, in which she was ably assisted by Anna and Dick—Anna singing second and Dick bass.

Early in the next week Mr. and Mrs. Hammond issued cards for a reception on the following Monday. And when the appointed day came they received their "dear five hundred friends" and had a crowded house with the coming and going of visitors from ten in the morning until four in the afternoon.

And this reception was the signal for a round of entertainments given to the newly married pair.

The first of a series was a ball at Colonel Seymour's, which was duly honored by all the family from Old Lyon Hall, including Drusilla, of course.

Then there was an evening party with music, but not dancing, at the Reverend Dr. Barber's.

Even the struggling medical practitioner at Saulsburg gave a tea-drinking.

And these neighborhood festivities in honor of the bride were kept up in good old-fashioned country style for a month or six weeks.

On the first of July, Hammond House being quite ready for occupation, the whole family from Old Lyon Hall went there to spend a few weeks, that the General might indulge in his favorite pastime of trout-fishing.

Here they remained until the first of September, when the near neighborhood of fresh water streams being considered unwholesome, they returned to Old Lyon Hall.

"And now," said Drusilla, when they were once more settled, "now it is my turn. Our next migration must be to Cedarwood."

"Are you so anxious to leave the "sweet old home?" inquired General Lyon, a little reproachfully.

"Oh, no indeed. Only when we do go, we must go to Cedarwood."

"Agreed," said the General, "we will go there next winter."

And so the matter was settled; for though all his young people were grown up and married, yet the word of the veteran soldier was law in the family circle.

During all this time Drusilla had not heard from Alexander or even expected to hear from him. She did not grieve after him. In the "sweet old home," in the love of her dear friends and in the caresses of her darling boy, she was almost as happy as it is given a mortal to be. But though she did not mourn over his absence, neither did she lose her interest in his welfare. She took the principal London and Paris papers upon the bare possibility of gaining intelligence of his movements.

Once she found his name in the list of visitors presented to the Queen at one of her Majesty's drawing-rooms published in the "Court Journal."

On another occasion she saw him announced as one of the speakers at a public meeting at Exeter Hall, noticed in the "Morning Chronicle."

Again he was named as the owner of the winning horse

at certain world-renowned races, reported in "Bell's Life."

That was all she knew about him.

Every week Drusilla received mis-spelled letters from her steward or housekeeper at Cedarwood.

"Mammy," chiefly discoursed of cows and calves, hens and chickens, and ducks and geese.

Mammy's "old man" treated of the condition of the "craps," the health of the "hosses," oxen, sheep, pigs, and so forth.

And Drusilla having been a pupil of that famous agriculturist, the late Mrs. Judge Lyon, was well able to give instructions to her farm-managers.

Thus, busily and happily passed the days of the little lady, until events occurred again to change the current of her life.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MAIL-BAG.

Newspaper! who has never felt the pleasure that it brings?
It always tells us of so many strange and wondrous things.
It makes us weep at tales of woe, it fills our hearts with mirth,
It tells us of the price of stock, and what produce is worth;
And when and where, and why, and how strange things occur on earth.
Has war's loud clarion called to arms? Has lightning struck a tree?
Has Jenkins broke his leg? Or has there been a storm at sea?
Has the sea-serpent shown his head? A comet's tail been seen?
Or has some heiress with her groom gone off to Gretna Green?
All this and many marvels more you from this sheet may glean.

—J. T. WATSON.

THE autumn passed away as pleasantly as the summer.

The time drew near when the family from Old Lyon Hall were to go to Washington for the season.

Drusilla wrote to her housekeeper and steward at Cedarwood, giving them full instructions to prepare the cottage for the reception of herself and friends, and she enclosed an order on her banker for the necessary funds.

In due time she received a communication from mam-

my informing her that all things were now ready for the party.

Then she consulted her relatives, and together they fixed upon an early day in January for the migration of the family. The General did not wish to move before that time, as he always preferred to spend his Christmas and New Year's holidays at Old Lyon Hall.

Drusilla wrote again, and told her servants on what day to expect herself and her party.

But a very severe fall of snow, coming about the first of January, blocked up the country roads, impeded travel and delayed their journey, and also kept back the mails, so that for many days after the one appointed for their removal, the family remained at Old Lyon Hall, cut off from communication with the rest of the world.

When at last there came a change of weather, and the snow melted and sunk into the earth, or was exhaled into the air, and the roads though muddy were passable, a messenger was sent to the post-office at Saulsburg to fetch the letters and papers.

He returned in the afternoon with a mail-bag well stuffed. He brought it into the small parlor, where the domestic circle was gathered.

Only those who have been under like circumstances long debarred from news, can realize the avidity with which that bag was seized and unlocked, and its contents turned out upon the center table around which the whole family party immediately clustered.

There were several unimportant letters for everybody, which were, however, read with the greatest interest by these weather-bound recluses.

And there was one which immediately fixed Drusilla's attention. It was from Cedarwood, and dated a few days back. Mammy was the writer, and after dilating upon the complete readiness of the cottage to receive the expected company, she wrote.

"And so we shall be a looking out for you on the fifth, ma'am. And now, I don't no as there's enny dainger, but before you brings yung Marster Lennud inter this enfected nayberhood, I deems it my duty to tell you as how the millignant skarlet fever is a ragin' here, and a

karryin' off duzzins. All the childun at the Drovur's Rest have got it; and likewise them that lives right across the road, opperside the gate as goes inter our place. But tho' I deems it my duty for to tell you of this, I doo not no as there is enny danger, as in coorse yung Marster Lennud woudent be going amung them."

Danger? Drusilla grew sick and turned pale at the very thought.

"What is the matter, my dear?" inquired General Lyon, looking up from his paper, and noticing her disturbance.

She silently handed him the letter. He read it attentively, and then looking over his spectacles, said:

"Of course, then, we must not think of going. Scarlet fever! bless my life and soul! Let us stay where we are."

"What is it, dear grandpa?" inquired Anna, looking up from her letter, while Dick laid down his paper to listen.

"Scarlet fever, my love, raging around Cedarwood, and slaying as many as King Herod himself. Of course, we can't think of such a thing as going there. What, expose little Leonard to such an infection? Suppose he was to catch the fever? and—the very idea makes me shudder! We'll stay home; we'll stay home, my children!" said the old man, emphatically, settling himself once more to his newspaper.

And, indeed, he was not sorry to have a good excuse for relinquishing the journey to Washington, which at this inclement season of the year could have no attraction for him.

"But if the ladies wish to go to the city, we can take apartments at one of the hotels," suggested Dick.

General Lyon looked uneasy. He did not wish to go to Washington on any terms in such bad weather. He would have gone to Cedarwood, only to keep his word with Drusilla; but missing that, he did not want to go to a hotel And now he was afraid of being outvoted.

Anna, however, came to his relief.

"Take apartments? No, I thank you, Dick! We would all like to go to Cedarwood and see Drusilla's 'pretty little wild-wood home' so near the city but, if we cannot go there, we will not pen ourselves up in a crowded hotel or boarding-house."

"No; *that* we won't!" put in the General.

"And I'm sure Drusilla thinks with us," added Anna.

"Indeed I do," acknowledged Drusa.

"So you see you are outvoted, my dear boy," chuckled the General.

"Oh, as to myself," said Dick, "I know when I'm well off, and I had a great deal rather stay here. It was for the ladies' sake I spoke."

"Then here we stay for the present, my children."

"And so I must write and tell my housekeeper that she must cover up the furniture and close the rooms for the winter, as we are not going to Washington this season. But, my dear uncle, I hope we shall go early in the spring."

"We shall go on the very first favorable opportunity, my dear, you may rely on that," answered the veteran.

And then the sight of Drusilla's unopened packet of foreign letters suggested a plan that he immediately proposed.

"And I'll tell you what, my dears," he said, "we have none of us seen Europe yet. Anna and Dick were to have gone there for a wedding tour, but they would not go so far away from the old man."

"We should not have enjoyed the trip, dear grandpa, if you had not been with us. Neither I nor Dick cared to go to Europe until we could all go together."

"Then, please Providence, we will go all together next spring," said the General, looking around upon his young people. "What do you say, Anna?"

"We shall both be delighted," answered Anna for herself and her husband, who immediately endorsed her reply.

"And you, Drusilla, shall you like to go to Europe?" inquired the General.

"Of all things! I have so long wished to see the old historical world!" she answered, pausing in her work of opening her foreign packet.

And then, for a little while, sitting around the table, they were all engaged in looking over the newspapers, each occasionally reading aloud to the others, who suspended their own employment to hear any little item of news supposed to be interesting.

"I declare there is nothing in our papers. Anything in yours, dear?" inquired Anna of Drusilla, who had been the only silent reader of the party.

"Not much of interest to us, over here. We do not care about the doings in Parliament, or the trials at the Old Bailey, or the meetings at Exeter Hall, or the murders in Bermondsey, or even about the movements of royalty and nobility."

"Oh, yes, we do care about that last item. We are intensely democratic and republican here, and so of course we are breathlessly anxious to know where 'Majesty,' took an airing, what 'Royal Highness' wore to the opera, and whom 'Grace' entertained at dinner!" laughed Anna.

"Then read for yourself, my dear," answered Drusilla, passing the "Times."

"And *to* yourself also, my child. We are not interested in those high themes," added the General, who was deep in a senatorial debate.

And Anna did read to herself for some time, but at length she exclaimed:

"Well, here is an item in which I think you will be interested, all of you."

Drusilla started and looked up anxiously. She thought that Anna had come upon some news of Alexander, and she wondered how she herself could have overlooked such a matter.

Even the General laid down his paper to listen.

"Well, what is it, dear?" inquired Dick.

Anna read:

"'The Barony of Killchrichtoun, so long in abeyance, has been claimed by a young American gentleman in right of his mother. The barony, it will be remembered, is not a male feoff only; but, failing male heirs, descends in the female line. The right of the new claimant is said to be indisputable. He is the great great grandson and only living descendant of George-Duncan-Bertie-Bruce, the tenth and last Baron of Killchrichtoun.'"

"Oh, I saw *that*," said Drusilla, with a look of disappointment.

"Who is he?" inquired General Lyon, indifferently.

"Does not say," answered the reader.

"Some poor devil of an adventurer making a donkey of himself, I suppose," said Dick.

"Come, I won't read you any more sensational news if that is the way you treat it," said Anna.

And the subject was dropped and forgotten.

The family circle then separated, each retiring to his or her own room, to fill up the time till the dinner hour with answering letters.

CHAPTER XIII.

OLD AND NEW.

One in stories of the past,
One in glories still to last,
One in speech and one in face,
One in honest pride of race,
One in faith and hope and grace.—M. F. TURNER.

"LET us go very early in the spring. If we stop here until the season begins to put forth all its beauty, I shall never be able to leave this 'sweet old home,' as Drusa calls it."

Thus spoke General Lyon one morning in March, when the family were assembled at breakfast, discussing the subject of their trip to Europe.

"Then as this is the fifteenth, and the spring is held to commence about the twenty-first, we had better begin to see about our voyage at once. Do you wish to start as early as the first of April?" inquired Dick.

"No; that plan would give us but two weeks to get ready in, and it is necessary to secure berths at least one month in advance. We shall not go before the middle of April. Then, also, we shall be sure that the equinoctial storms are quite over, to their very latest reverberation."

"Well, in any case, we had better fix upon our line of steamers, and write to the agent at once to take state-rooms," suggested Anna.

"Certainly," agreed the General.

And after a little more discussion of the merits of rival lines and individual steamers, their ship was selected, and Dick was authorized to write and secure state-rooms, and to be sure to get them amid-ships.

Dick wrote, and in due course of mail he received the agent's answer, saying that his party could have one state-room amid-ships and two near the bows.

Dick showed this letter to the General, and the two in consultation decided that the choice state-room should be assigned to Drusilla and her child, while the other members of the party should take the less desirable berths.

"But we must say nothing to her about it, or she may refuse to make herself and boy comfortable at our expense, and insist upon a different arrangement," said the General.

So Dick wrote again to the agent, enclosing a draft upon a New York banker to pay for the state-rooms.

And lively preparations were commenced for the voyage.

Drusilla, who never in her life had been a hundred miles from home, was delighted with the prospect of crossing the ocean and traveling in distant countries.

Not only was her mind all alert with the anticipations of intellectual pleasures, but her heart was cheered with the hope of being nearer to Alexander.

It was even possible that she might see him, or that he might see her little Leonard. And so Drusilla went enthusiastically to work with her preparations.

But the whole party made the usual mistake of inexperienced voyagers—they encumbered themselves with an unnecessary amount of luggage.

As if they were going beyond the bounds of civilization to live forever away from the possibility of purchasing the comforts or even the necessaries of life, they packed clothing by the twelve dozens, and filled many great trunks.

As if the steamer had no store-room or pantry, they took hampers of canned meats and fruits and jars of jellies and preserves.

And as if there were no surgeon in the staff of officers, they took a "doctor's book" and a "physic box," to say nothing of boxes of lemons, bottles of peppermint cordial and cases of soda powders as preventives of sea-sickness, or of books, magazines, checkers, chessmen, and musical instruments as preventives of ennui.

Thus the party of seven had twenty-one large trunks.

They took but two servants—Pina to nurse little Leonard and to wait on Drusilla and Anna; and young Jacob to attend upon the General and Dick.

Old Jacob, Marcy and Matty were to be left in charge of Old Lyon Hall. Leo was to go for a visit to his parents at Cedarwood.

All things being ready, the party of voyagers left Old Lyon Hall on the seventh of April, so as to have a day in Washington and a few days in New York before the sailing of the steamer on the fifteenth.

General Lyon had many friends and acquaintances either permanently or temporarily residing in Europe. To add to the number of these he had procured letters of introduction from distinguished people in America to their peers in the old world.

It was a very pleasant day of sunshine and showers in the capricious month, when they finally commenced their journey.

They traveled from Old Lyon Hall to the Stormy Petrel Landing in the capacious old family carriage.

They were followed by two wagons taking their heavy baggage.

At this steamboat landing they took the Sea Gull for Washington, where they all arrived in good health in the afternoon of the next day.

According to previous arrangement, they had a hack, and leaving their luggage at the railway station, went out to Cedarwood, where mammy and her old man were expecting to receive them, and where they found everything prepared for their comfort.

Rooms were aired, beds made and bright little woodfires kindled. And an exquisite early supper was in progress.

Mammy received her mistress and mistress's friends with a mixture of deference and dignity in her manners that was quite impressive.

And her joy over the fine growth and beauty of her nurseling, little Leonard, was natural and delightful.

The meeting also between Pina and Leo and their parents was very pleasant to see.

Our party had reached Cedarwood at the most beautiful hour of sunset.

General Lyon and Anna, who saw the place now for the first time and under its fairest aspect, were delighted with the cottage and its surroundings.

It was not an imposing and venerable mansion, overshadowed by mountains and forests, like Old Lyon Hall, but it was a pretty, wildwood home, fresh, bright, fair, and youthful. And Anna was in ecstasies over it.

But the sparkling shower-gems that glittered in the rays of the setting sun, from every leaf and flower and blade of grass, while they added so much to the beauty of the scene, made it a little too damp for health.

So Drusilla pressed her friends to go into the house, and General Lyon seconded her motion, and drove them in before him.

"This is all very pretty, my dears," he said, "but we don't want to begin our voyage with bad colds."

So they went into the little drawing-room, with which you are so well acquainted, the lovely little drawing-room, where Drusilla had watched out so many weary nights.

A cheerful fire was burning in the grate; and early spring flowers were blooming in the vases; and the curtains that separated it from the little dining-room were drawn aside, showing the snowy damask, shining silver, and Sevres china, of a well-set supper-table.

When they had stood before the fire a few moments to evaporate the slight dampness from their clothes and to look around upon the pretty place, the servants were summoned to show them to their several rooms.

Drusilla, attended by mammy, carrying little Leonard, went up to her own chamber.

It was looking very fresh and bright, pretty and attractive, with its crimson carpet and snowy curtains and its cheerful wood fire.

But with what feelings did the young wife and mother enter again this chamber, so filled with sweet and bitter memories?

Certainly with some sadness at the thoughts of all the happiness and the misery she had felt in this place. But also with much thankfulness, that she and her child had passed through the fiery trials unscathed—had come

forth from them sound in body and mind; and were now blessed with health and happiness and many friends.

She sank on her knees for a moment and returned sincere thanks to Divine Providence. And then she arose and made a few necessary changes in her dress, and went below, to await her friends in the drawing-room.

They soon joined her there.

And then the supper, prepared with mammy's best skill, was placed upon the table and the party sat down with good appetites to enjoy it.

Afterwards Drusilla tried the tone of her new piano, the one that had been ordered and sent to the cottage by her agent when she was expecting to take her friends there to spend the winter.

She found it out of tune from disuse, and so gave up the attempt to bring harmony out of it, for that evening.

She rang and brought "mammy" up into the drawing-room and said:

"Mammy, I shall write to my agent to send a man out here to put this instrument in tune. And after that you must make a fire in this room every wet day and you must play on it."

"Play on the fire, ma'am!"

"No, on the piano."

"On the pianner!"

"Yes, I tell you."

"Why la, ma'am, I couldn't do it! It ain't likely as I could! I don't know nothing about it! I couldn't play a tune, not no, if the salvation of my mortial soul depended on to it! I could play on the jewsharp, if that would do."

Drusilla smiled and said:

"I don't suppose you could play any pieces on this instrument. But I tell you what I want you to do. Look here—"

And Drusilla opened the piano and sat down before it. And mammy followed her and stood watching her motions.

"See, now; begin here at this left hand end and strike every one of these little ivory keys in turn, just as I do now, one after the other till you get up here to the right hand end, and then backwards one after the other till you get back to the left hand end again. And then do the same thing with the black keys. You can do that, can't

you ?" asked Drusilla, giving a practical illustration to her words.

"Oh yes, ma'am, I can do that well enough, and I think I shall like it. Let's see, now. I'm to begin at the end where they groans and roars like sinners in the pit, and I'm to end at the end where they whistles and chippers like birds in the bush."

"Yes ; that is what you are to do for five or ten minutes every day, or every few days, as you please. And you are to light a fire here whenever it is very damp. All this is to keep the instrument in tune, you know."

"Yes, ma'am, I think I shall like it. I *know* I shall like it. And it's easy enough !" said mammy, standing by her mistress and touching the keys. "La ! what will my old man say, when he finds out I am larnin' music on the pianner, in my ole ages of life, and practysin' every day like any boarding-school young lady ! Won't he be took right offen his feet along with 'stonishment ?"

"Very likely. And now that will do, mammy. I know you will like to spend as much time as possible with Pina, as she is so soon to leave you, so good night."

"Good night, ma'am. Good night, ladies and gentlemen."

When mammy had left the room, Anna broke out into a peal of silvery laughter.

"Well, upon my word, Drusa," she said, "I never should have thought of *your* device for keeping a piano in tune."

"Why not ? It is an obvious one, under the circumstances."

"Yes ; but think of the absurdity of having mammy seated at the piano, thumping upon the keys every day."

"She will not thump. And there is no absurdity. She will in this way keep the instrument in tune, and I should not at all wonder if in the process she should teach herself to play by ear. She will, if she has the ordinary musical talent of her race," said Drusilla.

And then seeing General Lyon was actually nodding, and that Dick was trying to smother a yawn, she lighted the bedroom candles.

Anna put one in Dick's hand, and waked up the General.

And the party bade each other good-night, and went to their several rooms.

The earliest hours next day were spent in the business that brought Drusilla to Cedarwood—the inspection of her little estate.

General Lyon, who had spent the best part of his long life in agricultural pursuits, was well fitted to judge correctly of such matters. And he pronounced everything connected with the farm to be very well ordered, and he complimented "mammy" and her "old man" on the skill and fidelity with which they had administered affairs.

By ten o'clock, the travelers having settled the business that brought them to Cedarwood, left for Washington to meet the mid-day train for New York, where they arrived at eleven o'clock at night.

They went to one of the up-town hotels, where they succeeded in procuring good rooms on the second floor. After a late but light supper, they retired to rest, and, fatigued by their long ride, slept soundly.

The next morning, Drusilla looked for the first time upon the great American seaport, as seen from the windows of her room at the hotel.

From her point of view, she expected to see a thronged thoroughfare. She was agreeably disappointed, for she looked down upon a broad, clean, shady street, with a park on the opposite side, for the house was a quiet up-town one.

While she stood at the window, General Lyon came to the door to take her down to breakfast, in the public room, where at one of the little tables she found Anna and Dick already-seated, and waiting for her.

After the usual greetings:

"This is the tenth," said Anna; "we have six days to see all that we wish to see in New York, and so we must be busy, Drusa."

"Yes," answered Drusilla.

"But first of all, we must go and take a look at our steamer. I see by this morning's paper that she got into port late last night," said the General.

"You and I can go and do that, sir. The ladies need not accompany us unless they wish," said Dick.

"Oh, but we *do* wish," put in Anna. "I was never inside of an ocean-steamer in my life. Were you, Drusilla?"

"Of course not."

"And wouldn't you like to go and take a look at the floating home in which we are to live for about two weeks?"

"Certainly I should, unless——"

"Unless what?"

"Our company should inconvenience uncle or Dick"

"It will not inconvenience *me* in the slightest degree. On the contrary it will give *me* pleasure. And—it don't matter about Dick," said the General.

"Then we'll go," concluded Anna, rising from the table.

"And you had better get ready at once, young ladies, as we have a great deal to do to-day after seeing the ship," advised the General.

"And Drusilla, if I were in your place, I would let Pina take little Lenny across the street into the park. Jacob can go along to look after them both. So they will be quite safe," counseled Anna.

Drusilla nodded and smiled assent.

And they went up stairs to put on their bonnets, and soon came down prepared for the drive.

The General and Dick were waiting in the hall, and the hired carriage was at the door.

"Only let me see little Lenny and his attendants safe in the park first, and then I will join you," said Drusilla, who was leading in her hand her little boy; who now, being seventeen months old, could walk and talk quite prettily.

"It is only across the street. It will not take us two minutes," added Anna.

"And I am so much afraid of his being run over by carriages," pleaded the young mother.

"Oh, go, go!" laughed the General.

And Drusilla and Anna saw their little charge safely across the street and within the enclosure of the green and shaded park; where, with many warnings and instructions to his attendants, they left him with Pina for his bearer and Jacob for his body-guard.

Then they returned and joined their own protectors.

"See how patiently he is waiting for us! Had ever any one such a dear, indulgent old uncle as I have?" said Drusilla, fondly regarding the old man as she approached.

In two more minutes they were all in the carriage, and rolling down the avenue towards Broadway.

They were nearly an hour in reaching their ship, which, with her passengers and freight all discharged, was lying quietly at her pier.

Led on by Dick, pressing through crowds of people and climbing over piles of merchandise, and passing over decks of other boats, our party at last boarded their steamer, the "Hurona."

Picking his way among coils of ropes and chains, and folds of canvas and heaps of coal, Dick went up to an officer on duty on the deck, and showing his tickets requested to see the rooms engaged by his party.

The officer politely acquiesced, called a steward, and directed him to show the gentleman and his friends to the first cabin.

The man obeyed, and led our party down to the elegantly furnished floating drawing-room of the steamer.

"This is much finer than anything we ever saw on our rivers and bays," said Anna, as she glanced around upon the velvet carpets, satin damask curtains, heavily gilded cornices, cheval mirrors, and all the showy appointments of the place.

"This is number three, if you please, sir," said the steward, opening the ground glass gilded door of a state-room on their right.

"Ah! yes; this is the place in which you will have to go to housekeeping for two weeks," said the General, turning with a smile to Drusilla.

It was a clean, cozy den, with an upper and a lower berth, and a sofa, wash-stand, shelves and drawers, and all that was required for convenience.

"Do you think you will be comfortable here?" inquired the General.

"I shall be *very* comfortable. This is the largest state-room I ever saw," said Drusilla, glancing around approvingly, although she was too inexperienced to know that this was indeed one of the very best positions in the ship.

"And now we will see ours," said Dick.

And the steward led the party far away up to the bows of the steamer, where he showed them two large, three-cornered state-rooms, directly opposite each other.

Though their position was execrable, they were even

much larger and much better furnished than was Drusilla's.

She noticed their ample size and many conveniences, and exclaimed;

"I am so glad that you have so much space and so many little drawers and cupboards to put away your things, and that you are so near each other, too."

And in her heart she wished that she could be near them also; for she could not know that they had the worst situation while she had the best, or that they would be harrassed by every motion of the ship, while she would scarcely feel it at all.

Dick and Anna smiled and enjoyed her "bliss of ignorance."

Having thus inspected their future quarters, they left the steamer and returned to the hotel.

Drusilla had been feeling a little secret anxiety on the subject of her boy.

But Master Lenny had neither been stolen, run over, choked, bumped, or injured in any other of the ways she had feared for him. He was quite safe, and full of a subject which he called "moodick" and "yed toat;" and which Drusa interpreted to mean a brass band attached to a marine corps that had been playing in the park to Lenny's great delight.

That evening our party went to the opera. The next day they visited the public institutions on the islands in East River.

And thus with sight-seeing or shopping all day long, and going to some place of amusement in the evening, they passed the time until Saturday.

On that morning, at about ten o'clock, they embarked on board the Hurona, and took up their quarters in the state-rooms already described.

The Hurona sailed at twelve noon.

And after a voyage of ten days, which was so calm, pleasant and uneventful as to leave no incident worth recording, the Hurona reached the shores of the Old World.

CHAPTER XIV.

ARRIVAL.

Britain! America! Mother and child,
Be heartily, happily, reconciled.
Look to the world around;
Stricken by frenzy, with guilt defiled,
A storm-tossed ship in the surges wild,
Soon to be wrecked and drowned!

Mother and daughter against the world.
Under your peaceful flags unfurled,
Rights may rally at length;
While Earth's hurricane, inwardly curled
Spent with ruin of wrongs down-hurled
Weakens and wastes its strength.—M. P. T.

To see for the first time the shores of the old world! It is indeed like coming to another world! like entering into another life!

Have we died? Was the vast sheet of water we passed the River of Death? And is the land we see before us the abode of departed spirits? If so, is it Hades, or Elysium? It looks more like Elysium!

So mused Drusilla as she stood dreamily leaning over the bulwarks of the Hurona, and gazing on the lovely shores of the Emerald Isle, all glittering in the beams of the rising sun, as the ship approached the beautiful Cove of Cork.

She had risen very early and come up on deck alone to get a quiet first view of the land. All was bustle around her, for the ship was preparing to lay to for the purpose of landing the passengers for Ireland. The tiny steamboat from the shore was already puffing and blowing its way out to the ocean leviathan to take them off.

Men, women and children, servants, porters and baggage, began to throng up from below.

But Drusilla, plunged in a dream of the past, was almost unconscious of the confusion around her.

"Elysium! for certainly it is peopled with the spirits of departed heroes and sages!" she murmured to her-

self as the rivers of history and tradition rolled through her memory.

A caressing hand was laid upon her shoulder and a kind voice said in her ear :

"Good-morning, my child! Well, you see before you 'Hibernia,' 'Erin,' 'Ireland,' the 'ould counthry!' Now, what do you think of it?"

"Oh, uncle, it is a lovely land! Who can look upon it and not love it? And, oh! what an experience to look upon it for the first time! It is as if some beautiful creation of imagination was actually realized to the senses! To look upon her shores and think of her history, her legends and her poetry! to almost see the shades of her dead heroes, sages and minstrels!" said Drusilla, enthusiastically.

"Well, my dear, I dare say ardent young strangers like you feel all these things and see all these ghosts. But I don't suppose the people who live in the land, or the mariners that frequent the cove, ever do. Such is the effect of novelty in your case, and of habit in theirs."

"But can *any* length of habit blind one to such beauty as this? Oh, look! was ever such brilliant green herbage spread over the earth, or such heavenly blue sky above it, or such soft white clouds sailing over it? See those lovely, billowy hills! as the cloud-shadows pass over them they seem to rise and fall, like the waves of the ocean, only more gently! It reminds of something Tennyson said, What was it? Oh——

> 'The hills are shadows and they flow
> From form to form and nothing stands;
> They melt like mists, the solid lands,
> Like clouds they shape themselves and go.'

He was speaking geologically of the changes wrought by centuries; but here the beautiful green sunlit or cloud-shaded hills do seem every moment to 'flow from form to form,' 'to melt like mists,' 'like clouds to shape themselves and go.'"

"You are a dreamer, little Drusa!"

"It *does* seem like a dream. I should not be the least surprised to wake up and find myself—where?—anywhere at all in my past life! In my little corner of the housekeeper's room in the Chief-Justice's dwelling; in the loll-

ing chair of the little drawing-room at Cedarwood waiting for Alick to come back; or at dear old Lyon Hall with little Lenny trying to pull my eyes open. Life seems often very like a dream."

"And always in any great change of scene or circumstances."

"And most of all in coming to an old, historical country like this, that we have always known in imagination, and never in reality. But look, uncle! do not let us lose the features of this sweet scene! It will be a picture in our mind's eye for many coming years. See, away there on the horizon, crowning the most distant of the visible hills, a cluster of old, gray ruins—the remains of some medieval castle or monastery! And look a little further down. See the mossy huts, dotted about at long intervals, half hidden in dells and thickets, and under great trees; and nearer still, the town with its glittering spires and its forest of shipping!"

"Yes, my dear, the ninth century and the nineteenth are brought together in this view!"

Here the old man felt a pair of tenacious little claws fasten themselves upon his leg, and a shrill, tiny voice sing out:

"Untle Danpa! Untle Danpa Dennel!"

And, turning, he saw and lifted up little Lenny.

Little Lenny's language needs translating. He called or tried to call every one around him by the names he heard them call each other. Thus, with him, Drusilla was called "Doosil;" Anna, "Nannan;" Dick, "Dit;" while General Lyon, who was variously called uncle, grandpa, or General, was "Untle Danpa" or even "Untle Danpa Deneral."

"Well, my little man, what do you want?" inquired the General, smiling on the child.

"Hee, hee!" cried Lenny, pointing to the shore. "Mate Doosil tate Lenny home."

"Make Drusil 'take Lenny home?' Why where is home?"

"Dere, dere! Mate Doosil tate Lenny home!"

"That's not home!"

"Yet tid too! Mate Doosil tate Lenny home, *dit minute*!"

"You peremptory little despot! what do you mean?"

"Oh, uncle, you know ever since Lenny lost sight of land, he has been abroad; now he sees it again, he thinks it is home!" said Drusilla, smiling on the child. Little Leonard, with his father's features inherited much of his father's self-will; and so he soon became both obstreperous and vociferous in his demands to be taken home.

"Mamma will take Lenny over there presently," said Drusilla soothingly, as she took the child in her arms.

"You know, uncle, our steamer will lie here until this afternoon, and we shall have time to go on shore for an hour or so," she added turning to the veteran.

"Yes, I suppose Anna and Dick would like it. I know I should. And—ah; here they come now!" said the General, as his niece and nephew appeared upon the deck.

"What a charming view!" exclaimed Anna.

"It is like Fairyland!" cried Dick.

"Come, come! none of that now you know! We've had enough of it! Here's Drusa been singing its praises ever since I came to her side. And there, thank goodness, there's the breakfast bell! Come down now, and praise the company's cook! Two weeks' trial has proved him to be incomparable," said the General, leading the way to the saloon.

After breakfast, the party got ready to go on shore.

The little steamer made several trips between the ship and the shore, and they availed themselves of its accommodation to land.

Terrace after terrace they ascended the picturesque heights of the town until they reached the highest point —"Spy Hill,"—from which they enjoyed a magnificent bird's-eye view of the sea and land—the broad expanse of the channel; the harbor, with its abrupt headlands and its countless shipping; its shores, with their beautiful trees and elegant villas; and the rolling countries beyond.

They spent the morning in walking about amid the charming scenery, until little Lenny, having tired his own legs and everybody else's arms, got hungry and sleepy, and ordered his biggers to give him something to eat and to put him to bed.

Then they went down to the village, entered a pastry-

cook's shop, and got a light luncheon; and, next, they hired a boat to take them back to their ship.

They found that they had no time to lose, for she was getting up her steam to start again; and, if they had not hastened, they might have been left behind.

The steamer sailed at four o'clock that afternoon; but she encountered rough weather in the channel, so that it was nearly dark the next day when she reached Liverpool.

And now our party felt the inconvenience of having so much baggage. They were anxious to hasten on to London. They could see Liverpool at any future time before their return home; but they wished to reach London soon enough to enjoy the last few remaining weeks of the season, and, above all, to be in time to see the "Derby," which was to come off in two days. There was a train to start at six that evening, and if they could have caught it, they might have reached London by twelve midnight, in time for a good night's rest. And if it had not been for their great quantity of baggage, they could have done so; but they had twenty-one trunks to be inspected by the custom-house officers, and had also to wait their turn to be attended to.

There is much grumbling at these functionaries; but for my part, I have found them always courteous—doing their ungracious duty with as much forbearance as they could conscientiously exercise.

"You have made us lose the train. We wished to go up to London by the six o'clock express," growled General Lyon, as the officer on duty came up at length to examine the luggage.

"Very sorry, sir; but it could not be helped. There is a parliamentary goes at ten."

"'A parliamentary?' What the deuce is a 'parliamentary?'"

The man looked up in surprise at this traveler's ignorance, yet scarcely knew how to enlighten him on so simple a subject; for the most obvious things are often the most difficult of explanation to those that do not understand them.

"What the mischief is the parliamentary?" again inquired the General.

The officer looked up from the open trunk before which he was kneeling, and answered, slowly :

"Well, sir, the parliamentary is——the parliamentary, you know."

"Humph!"

"It is not the express."

"So I should judge from its name."

"It is the slow, heavy train."

"Everything 'parliamentary' is, I should imagine. When does this 'parliamentary' start?"

"At ten to-night, and gets in at five in the morning."

"A most uncomfortable hour!—too late to go to bed, and too early to be up! What the deuce makes your 'parliamentary' so slow and heavy?"

"It is the people's train—the accommodation—carries the three classes of carriages and stops at all the stations."

"Humph-humph!"

"The first-class carriages are very comfortable, and you can sleep in them as comfortably as in your own arm-chair."

"Humph! that might do very well for an after-dinner nap; hardly for a night's rest!"

While they were thus conversing, the custom-house officer was passing from one trunk to another, lifting their lids and looking in. He finished, and marked the lot, and went away.

"I think, grandpa, if you had had ten thousand dollars worth of smuggled goods in these trunks, and designed to cheat the revenue of the duties, you could not have gone to work more cunningly than by talking as you did to the officer. The man couldn't attend to what he was doing for listening to you," laughed Anna.

"Now what are we to do with all these 'impediments?' I wish for my part, the custom-house fellow had seized the lot; or that we had encountered a storm at sea, and it had been found necessary to throw them all overboard to lighten the ship! It would have saved us a deal of time, and trouble, and expense. And we have all we really want in our carpet-bags," growled the General.

"Uncle, I hope you are not turning into a regular grumbler? That wouldn't be like yourself! But you have done nothing *but* grumble, ever since you landed,

and without the slightest provocation, you naughty old uncle!" said Drusilla, saucily.

"My dear, give me some credit that I do not SWEAR as well as grumble!"

"Oh, uncle, think what the Dutchman said when he whipped his sulky son,—'Hans, you might as coot say 'tamn' as tink 'tamn!'"

"Drusil, I am thinking 'tamn' very intently, ever since I came on shore. Now, where the deuce are the porters? Now, if this were New York, one would be deafened by them," growled the General, showing himself in front.

His grievance was removed, and he was "deafened by them" and others immediately.

"Porter, sir?"

"Cab, sir?"

"Fly, sir?"

"Queen's hotel?"

"Adelphi?"

"Star-and-Garter?"

"Times, sir?"

Were some of the sounds shouted into his ears—not once, but a score of times.

"Queen's hotel, sir?"

"Lord Admiral, sir?"

"Carriage, sir? How many, sir? Where to, sir?"

"How can I tell when I can't hear myself think, for your noise? Dick, answer all these men, and see to the baggage being taken to the station. Jacob hasn't knowledge enough—he would be sure to get it lost; though for that matter, I wish he would lose it—it would be an immense relief to me! I shall take Anna and Drusilla over to that restaurant, to get them out of this din, and to give them a cup of tea."

"All right, uncle. Pray go and make yourself and the ladies comfortable," said Dick, good-humoredly.

"And let me see," said the General, examining his watch. "It is now nine o'clock. The—hem—'parliamentary' starts at ten. We have but an hour to wait. It will not be worth while to go to a hotel. I think it will be best for us to stop over there until it is time for us to go to the station. See to getting our tickets, Dick, will you? And have a carriage at the door there in time."

"All right, uncle. Make yourself easy."

"Come along, young women! Pina! give me that child. You look as if you were ready to drop under his weight."

"A sleeping baby is twice as heavy as a waking one, sir," said the girl, as she placed the child in the old man's arms.

And regardless of the staring street boys who grinned at seeing the "old gent" playing nursemaid, he crossed the street to a cheerful gas-lighted pastry-cook's shop, where he and his party were accommodated with a small private parlor and a neatly-spread tea-table.

Before they got half through with tea, Dick joined them and reported that he had procured the tickets for a whole compartment in the first-class carriages, which he declared to be quite as comfortable as the civil custom-house officer had represented them to be.

Dick was served with a cup of tea, a plate of sallyluns, toast, periwinkles, shrimps, and the finest strawberries he had ever seen.

Dick quaffed his tea with avidity, for he was both heated and thirsty; and he also enjoyed the toast and the sallyluns; but he glanced suspiciously at the periwinkles and the shrimps.

"What manner of fish, fruit or vegetable may these be?" he inquired, taking up a plate of periwinkles and squinting at them.

"Taste and see," answered Anna, as with the point of a pin she delicately drew one from its snail-like shell.

Drusilla was at the same time peeling a shrimp for little Lenny.

Dick glanced from one to the other and shuddered. These tea-table delicacies looked—the one so like an insect, the other so like a reptile.

"Try this, Dick," coaxed Anna, as she offered him a morsel from the point of a new pin.

Dick shrank.

"Now don't be prejudiced! Consider what an uninviting edible is the oyster, in the shell or out of it! Who that did not know how good it is would ever dare to eat it? Now try this?"

"Oh, thou modern Eve! I take it, since thou tellst me

it is 'good for food,'" sighed Dick, as he gingerly accepted the dainty.

"Now, how do you like it?" inquired Anna.

"My temptress, it is delicious! I thank thee for introducing me to the acquaintance of the periwink."

"I knew you would like it," said Anna.

"More s'imp? more s'imp!" called out little Lenny, for whom his mamma could not peel fast enough.

"Are they good also, Master Lenny?" smiled Dick, helping himself to one.

"Day dood. Mate Nannan peel for woo, Dit," answered the little Turk, who evidently thought that women were made to wait on men and—boys.

"They have an exquisite flavor! They are as fine, with a difference, as the periwinkle itself. Master Lenny, your humble servant. I'm bound to you for making me acquainted with the shrimp. I don't know which of these two dainties I like the best. After this I can believe in a man being in love with two——"

"Dishes at the same time," interjected Anna.

"Ladies at the same time," concluded Dick.

"More s'imps! More s'imps! Mate Pina peel!" vociferated the little despot, for whom his mamma could not keep up the supply.

And Pina was called to help; but new hands are awkward at the shrimp peeling business; and as Pina took a minute to peel a delicate morsel that Master Lenny swallowed in a second, he soon called out again:

"More s'imps! more s'imps! Mate Nannan peel too!"

Anna good-naturedly complied. But even with her help the demand continued to be greater than the supply. And the tiny autocrat, looking around and seeing no more female slaves at hand, called out:

"More s'imps! more s'imps! And make *Dit* peel."

And Dick obediently sacrificed his periwinkles, and cheerfully betook himself to the service of the liliputian tyrant.

But still the demand exceeded the supply, for these vassals were awkward at the work; so, after glancing dubiously at his venerable relative, Master Leonard sang out lustily:

"More s'imps! more s'imps! And mate Untle Granpa peel!"

And the veteran soldier of hard-won fields, the leader of tens of thousands, smiled submissively and obeyed the baby boy.

But there is an end to all things, even to infant despotism, and so when the three-quarters past nine struck, the party rose from the table, for they had but fifteen minutes to catch the train in.

They hurried on their outer garments and hastened into the hired fly and were driven rapidly to the station.

Lively and well-lighted, but by no means noisy or confused was the scene. There was a very long and heavy train of carriages, for it carried the "three estates," but so orderly were all the arrangements, so exact were the regulations, so well trained the guards and porters, so vigilant the police, that all went smoothly and surely as clock-work.

As if by magic, our travelers soon found themselves in a first-class carriage, with all their luggage piled on the roof, flying along with great rapidity, while hedges, fields and farm-houses, seen dimly in the half light, reeled past on either side. Though it was ten o'clock post meridian, yet in these northern latitudes, and at this season, it was still twilight. The carriage in which our travelers found themselves was in many respects like the inside of a large family coach, only it was much more capacious than any such vehicle. It had eight well-cushioned spring seats—four front and four back; and glass doors and windows on the right and left In recesses under the seats and racks over them there was ample space for the storage of all their light luggage.

Anna and Drusilla occupied the back seats, General Lyon and Dick the front ones. Down on the floor between them, on a bed made of rugs and shawls, with a carpet-bag for a pillow, little Lenny, satisfied with shrimps, was laid asleep. Pina and Leo had seats in a second-class carriage.

Once shut up in their own carriage with the train in motion, our travelers were as isolated from all other people as if they had been making the journey in their

own family coach. They neither saw nor heard anything of their fellow-passengers.

For the first hour they conversed a little with each other, making comments upon the ride, as:

"How long the twilight lasts in these parts;" or:

"Will this light mist turn to rain before morning?" or:

"What a carefully cultivated country! There is no waste land hereabouts. The whole scene seems to be a perpetual landscape garden."

But in the second hour they gradually succumbed to fatigue and drowsiness and dropped off to sleep—each reposing in a corner as he or she best could, and waking only when the train would stop at a wayside station, which, by-the-by, was every few minutes.

Whenever it stopped there were passengers to get in or out, but the train was so very long that the chances were that these passengers would be a quarter of a mile before or behind them; and so, though our friends always on these occasions roused themselves and looked forth, they saw little beyond the lighted station, the vanishing platform, and running guards and porters.

Drusilla always looked from the windows with something more than curiosity—with eager interest; for since she landed in England, her uppermost thought had been that she was in the same country with her Alick; and who knew but she might meet him anywhere at any moment—even at one of these wayside stations?

But whenever the train started again, the swift motion, and the late hour, and the comfortable, not to say luxurious resting-place lulled her in a light slumber, in which she was still conscious of the strange, new scene—the wondrous old country through which she was passing; feeling that she loved the old motherland of her race, and loved it well; dreaming that she was returning there after ages of expatriation; seeing shades of knights in armor, "old ancestral spirits;" seeing visions of mediæval halls, with all the barbaric pageantry of long ago, dimly shadowed forth. Then waking up to note with delight the fresh, bright rural scenes of to-day—the thickly-sown, but luxuriantly-growing fields; the green hedges; the crowded but flourishing gardens; the shrub-shaded, vine-

covered cottages—the humblest laborer's hut all mantled with flowering green creepers that made it look like a garden bower, the slenderest strip of land among the line of rails thickly planted with vegetables,—nothing wasted, nothing ugly.

It was only a little past midnight, yet it was already morning, and every moment day broadened.

Drusilla continued to gaze with surprise and delight upon the beautiful land; for, whatever the sky of England may be, the face of the country, especially in this region, is very charming.

Sometimes Drusilla's contemplations would be interrupted by a restless movement of little Lenny. She would then stoop and turn him over, and he would fall asleep again.

General Lyon and Anna slept so soundly at length that they were not awakened by the stopping of the train, nor even by the loud snoring of Dick, who, when in a state of somnolency, was a fine performer on the proboscis—the only musical instrument he understood.

Long before they reached London, its distant, huge cloud of smoke and fog hanging upon the horizon greeted the eye—its distant thunder of blended sounds came softened to the ear.

Soon they were at Euston Square station, in all the great crowd and bustle of the parliamentary train's arrival.

It was surprising to them, amid the hundreds of travelers and the hills of luggage to be cared for, how soon our party, without much effort on their own part, was attended to.

Before they had time to become impatient, they found themselves in one cab, followed by their servants in another, bowling along through the streets of London.

It was but little past four o'clock, and all the shops were still closed, and the sidewalks nearly deserted. Only the earliest bakers', butchers', and costermongers' carts were abroad, or cabs and vans taking passengers to and from early trains, or cook-maids at the heads of area stairs, receiving from the milkman the daily supply.

Even at this early hour, there were many novelties of the London streets that struck pleasantly upon our trav-

elers' eyes, among them the abundance of flowers shown in almost every open window of every house. But what pleased Master Lenny most was the costermongers' little carts, piled with green vegetables and ripe fruit, and drawn by little donkeys. Master Lenny took them to be toy-carts for little boys to play with, and insisted upon being accommodated with one immediately; nor was he to be quieted until his mamma promised him a mysterious pleasure in a donkey-ride at Greenwich.

It is a long drive from Euston Square station to the Morley House, Trafalgar Square, which had been selected as their hotel by General Lyon, at the recommendation of a fellow passenger on board the Hurona.

It was nearly five o'clock when they reached the house, yet few servants seemed to be stirring about it.

They could be accommodated with apartments immediately, said the polite functionary who happened to be on duty; but he regretted to add that they would have to wait for breakfast, as the head waiter did not rise until seven.

"Two hours to wait. It is too bad, after such a tiresome night-ride," groaned General Lyon.

He had endured nights of toils and days of fasting, in the battle times of long ago; but he was young then and the cause was great, so he had rather liked that sort of life; but it was different with him now that he was old and fated to abide the pleasure of the head waiter.

They were shown to large, airy, clean bedrooms, all near each other, and opening upon the corridors, and having one private parlor in the suite.

In this parlor our party gathered for a moment to consult. The delay of breakfast is sometimes felt as a calamity.

"Can we not procure even a cup of coffee for love or money?" inquired Dick.

The official was very sorry, but the head waiter would not rise till seven.

"Will you be so good as to send a chamber-maid, then?" requested Anna.

He was very sorry, but he was afraid the chamber-maids were not yet stirring. The hour was early.

"So it is; and we must be reasonable. Servants must have their rest, you know," said Drusilla, soothingly.

And the really obliging attendant smiled and bowed.

"Let us go to our rooms and make ourselves comfortable and lie down. Perhaps we shall sleep; at any rate, we shall rest. The two hours will soon pass," continued Drusilla.

"No, no, no, no! No do 'leep!" objected the head of the family, who had had his own sleep out and had waked up hungry. "No do 'leep! More s'imp—more s'imp!"

"Poor little fellow, *he* is hungry," sighed Drusilla.

"I think I can get some warm milk and bread for the child, ma'am," said the man.

"Oh, I shall he very much obliged to you if you will. We can wait better than he can," said Drusilla, gratefully.

And the man went out and fetched the milk and bread, which, at first, Lenny refused to touch, peremptorily exclaiming:

"No, no, no! No b'ed milt!—more s'imp!"

But being assured that his slaves could not procure shrimps for him, he seemed to divine that even despots cannot compel people to perform impossibilities, and also being very hungry, he ate his bread and milk.

When Lenny had finished his meal, the party separated and went to their bedrooms to lie down for an hour or two. They did not expect to sleep, but they slept—so soundly that they did not awake until some time after seven o'clock, when a waiter rapped at General Lyon's door to take his orders about the breakfast.

The General referred him for instructions to Mrs. Hammond

And soon the whole party, much refreshed by their sleep, assembled in the private parlor for breakfast.

It was after eight, however, before it was finally set upon the table.

There were fine Mocha coffee, English breakfast tea, rich cream, sweet butter, fresh eggs, broiled ham and broiled pigeons, light bread, toast and muffins.

For a few minutes our famished travelers were so closely engaged in discussing these delicacies, that not a word was wasted upon any other subject than their meal. But after they had all eaten and were satisfied, they began to talk of their immediate plans of enjoyment. The great city held out a thousand attractions to stran-

gers. It was an "embarrassment of riches" in the sight-seeing line that troubled them.

"Where shall we go first?" was the great question.

Various answers were returned.

"To the Royal Academy."

"To Westminster Abbey."

"To the Tower."

"The British Museum."

"St. Paul's Cathedral."

"The Zoological Gardens."

These were a few of the suggestions offered; but as the three young people spoke at once, it was impossible for their elder and arbitrator to know who favored what.

"I think, upon reflection," he said, at length, "that we had better not attempt any of those great sights just now To see either one of them well would be an exhausting day's work; and we wish to be fresh for the Derby to-morrow. The Derby, my children! Come! we shall have time enough to see everything else afterwards. But we can only see the Derby to-morrow; so to-day, I think, we will just take a fly and drive around and leave some of our letters of introduction, with our present address. What do you say to that plan?"

As the plan was of the General's devising, all agreed to it.

A fly was ordered, and the ladies retired to change their dresses for the drive.

Drusilla was the most expeditious with her toilet. She soon returned to the parlor fully equipped for her drive.

Little Lenny, in charge of his nurse, was standing within the recess of the front window, dancing with delight at something he saw outside. Drusilla heard a pair of shrill, cracked voices in apparent conflict below.

"Hee! hee! Doosil—hee!" shouted the child.

Drusilla approached, and witnessed for the first time the renowned Punch and Judy show.

While standing there and enjoying her child's enjoyment, she saw a gentleman come forth apparently from a coffee-room below and start to cross Trafalgar Square; and with a half-suppressed cry she recognized—

Alexander Lyon.

She had been always looking for him—always expect-

ing to see him since she first set foot in England, yet she had known that her looking was like the search for a needle in a hay-rick, and her expectations as extravagant in the first instance as they would be in the last.

And now that she actually saw him walk out from the same house in which she herself was sojourning, the astonishment and the shock were so great, that she reeled and held by the window-sill for support.

Without stopping to consider whether the action might be proper or otherwise, she turned to the waiter who was engaged in taking away the breakfast service, and beckoned him to her side. He came, his mouth a little open with wonder.

"Does that gentleman stop here?" she inquired, pointing to Mr. Lyon.

"Lord Killcrichtoun? Yes, ma'am, he stops here," replied the waiter.

"No, you mistake. You think I mean somebody else; but I mean *that* gentleman. Look! he is just half across the square now."

"Just so, ma'am, Lord Killcrichtoun of Killcrichtoun, County of Sutherland, North Britain. Yes, ma'am, he is here."

"I am sure you mistake. I allude to the gentleman in gray. Look! now he lifts his hat and replaces it. There he is passing the corner?"

"Precisely, ma'am. He is up for the Derby, ma'am, begging your pardon. My lord goes down to Epsom this evening, ma'am. Any more commands, ma'am?"

"Thanks, no; you may go."

Drusilla sank down upon the nearest seat, unmindful of the prattling of her little Lenny, who was still laughing with delight at the broad absurdities of the puppet show; for the whole truth flashed on her now. The young American gentleman who had claimed the barony of Killcrichtoun, in the right of his mother, was no other than her own Alick! And he was living under the same roof with her! Did he know that she was here, or would he find it out? Were the names of all new-comers registered in open books in English hotels as in American ones? If so, was it his habit to look at them? What

would he think if he saw her name on the books of the hotel—

"*Mrs. Alexander Lyon, child, and servant.*"

Would he happen to see her? Would he wish to see little Lenny? Suppose he were to meet her—what would he say or do? He might pass her; but could he pass little Lenny—charming little Lenny—fair-haired, blue-eyed little Lenny, with his father's own features and complexion?

It was scarcely possible that he could.

And if he should stop to caress his son, to take him in his arms, to press him to his heart, what next? Would he stop there, and put the child away again?

Not likely! for, setting natural affection aside, now that he had a title, he would want an heir; and what a fine, promising one was this?

Or would he perhaps claim the child and take him from his mother? He *could* do so. The law would give him Lenny, though it should break the mother's heart. Would he avail himself of this law to tear her child from her arms?

No, never! she thought; badly as he had treated her while he had been maddened by the passions of pride and ambition, he would never while in his sober senses—never in cold blood deal her such a cruel blow.

True he had once, in bitterly cruel terms, denounced and renounced her forever; but she thought of his words whenever they forced themselves upon her memory, only as the ravings of frenzied anger; she knew that they would never have been carried out to extremity. Alexander had told her that she might starve, but she felt in her heart that he would never even have let her want!

And now she felt sure that, however he might learn to love his little Lenny,—however he might desire to possess him, he would never attempt to take him away from her.

No, she was sure that he would rather let little Lenny lead him back to her.

Her hopes arose, her heart beat quickly at the thought.

Did she then feel no jealous pain at the idea of being reunited to her husband only through his natural affection for his child?

Not the least. She loved both too purely for such jealousy.

On the contrary, she felt that it would be sweet to be indebted to little Lenny for a reconciliation with his father. And she knew, besides, that once reconciled to Alick by *any* means, and especially by this means, she could WIN HER WAY to his heart, and gain a firmer hold there than she had ever possessed before.

Then her thoughts reverted to his new title:

"Lord Killcrichtoun—Baron Killcrichtoun of Killcrichtoun."

From what she had read she knew that it was an almost barren title, no wealth coming with it,—only an old ruin, and a few wretched huts in the wildest part of the Highlands appertaining to it.

But in his pride of race he had claimed the title, and no doubt had gone to great expense to prove his right to it, and he would probably remain in England to enjoy it, since in America it would only make him ridiculous.

She herself was strongly attached to her native country with its bright sunshine, its vast forests and its high mountains. All her friends and all her fortunes were there, yet she would gladly expatriate herself to live "anywhere, anywhere" under the sun, with her Alick.

While she mused, General Lyon, Anna, and Dick came in, ready for their drive.

Dick said that the fly was waiting.

So, after charging Pina to be very careful of little Lenny, Drusilla followed her party down-stairs and into the carriage, and they started—to go first as in duty bound to leave their cards at the American Embassy, and then to leave their letters of introduction with the people for whem they were intended.

They did but stop and send in their cards and letters, they made no visit anywhere; but preferred to leave it to the option of their friends and correspondents to make their acquaintance or not.

They returned to the Morley House at four in the afternoon.

Anna went into her bedroom to take off her bonnet; but Drusilla hurried at once into the parlor to look after her child.

She found little Lenny quite safe; but boiling over with excitement, not to say indignation.

"Why, what is the matter with my little man?" inquired the mother, sitting down and lifting the child to her lap.

"Man! man! tut off Lenny turl!" exclaimed the child, pointing to his head, while his blue eyes flashed and his rosy cheeks flushed.

"Cut off Lenny's curl? Who did it? Pina! who did this?" inquired Drusilla, looking at the short lock from which the curl had been severed.

"Indeed, ma'am, I don't know! I left Master Leonard in charge of the chambermaid only one minute, while I ran to get his milk and bread, and when I came back it was done."

"And what did the chambermaid say?"

"She said as how——"

"Never mind! I had rather hear the account from herself. Go and try and find that chambermaid, and fetch her here."

Pina went on the errand and soon returned with a blooming English girl, who curtsied and stood waiting orders.

"What is your name?" inquired Drusilla.

"Susan, ma'am."

"Well, Susan, did you have charge of this little child for a few minutes?"

"Yes, ma'am," answered the girl, blushing.

"Then how came you to let any one cut off his curl?"

"Indeed, ma'am, I couldn't help it! It was done so sudden. And I didn't dare oppose my lord."

"My lord?"

"My Lord Killcrichtoun it was, ma'am, who did it."

"Killcrichtoun!" repeated Drusilla, as a light broke on her mind.

"*Killchristian!*" exclaimed Pina, in dismay. "*Killchristian!!* It's a wonder he had not cut off the child s head as well as his hair! Good gracious! was ever such a heathenish, savage, barbarious name!"

"So it was one of the gentlemen of the house who did it?" inquired Drusilla, striving to control the excess of her emotions.

"Yes, ma'am; but indeed I thought by the way he be-

haved that he had a right to do it, and that the child was some kin to him. He don't act so like a mad gentleman in general, ma'am."

"Tell me all about it."

"Well, ma'am, now I think upon it, I almost believe he must have watched his opportunity; for as soon as ever the nursemaid was gone, he came to the door, looked all around, and seeing no one but me and my charge, took the boy up in his arms and hugged him and kissed him and fondled him, and almost cried over him; and then before I could suspect, much less prevent his doing it, he out with his pen-knife and whipped off that pretty golden curl. And then he hurried away. I think he heard the nursemaid coming, for she was in the room the next minute. And you came in almost immediately after, ma'am."

"Then this has just occurred?"

"Not ten minutes ago, ma'am. Anything else, ma'am?"

"No," answered the lady. And the girl withdrew.

Drusilla called Pina to follow her and went slowly into her bedroom.

While taking off her bonnet and mantle and changing her dress for dinner, she was scarcely conscious of what she was doing. Her thoughts were absorbed by what had just occurred.

"Poor Alick," she said; "to love his child, his only son and only child, and not feel free to caress him! Oh, Alick, Alick, dear, do you think *I* would keep him from you? Much as I love him, you might have him half the time; you might have him all day, so that you would be kind to him, and I know you would be, and would let me have him back at night. Yes, Alick, dear, though you might never see or speak to *me* again, I would not keep the child out of your way. Love your boy, Alick, dear, and take all the comfort from him you can. He has been a great comfort to me, Alick, the little son you gave me, has."

So ran her thoughts as she mechanically put on a mauve taffeta dress and fastened her point lace collar with a diamond brooch, scarcely knowing what she wore.

Pina was also holding discourse, but not with herself or in silence.

"My precious little pet," she said, as she dressed Master

Lenny in his embroidered white frock. "My pretty little darling, did its Pea-nut leave it all alone with a stranger in a strange land, where Killchristians go about scalping little babies, my sugar? I will never leave it alone again as long as I live, or leastways as long as we stay in this land, where Killchristians cut and hew at babies! Suppose he had cut off its precious little finger or toe? What would its Pea-nut have done?" Then turning impatiently to her mistress, she said:

"Ma'am, you don't seem to care at all now about that wild beast of a Killchristian rushing in upon little Lenny like a North American Indian with a drawn knife and scalping off his hair. Suppose it had been his precious nose or his ears that the savage took a fancy to? But it's my belief after all he was a thief and wanted to sell Lenny's pretty golden curls to a lady's hair-dresser; and he would have cut all the curls off his head if he hadn't heard me coming. Wish I had caught him at his tricks! Never mind, let me ever catch him near little Lenny again, that's all! Lenny will be certain to know him again, if I do not!"

"You will know him, Pina; but you do not know of whom you are speaking. The gentleman who cut off Lenny's curl had a perfect right to do so. Lord Killcrichtoun is Mr. Alexander Lyon, or was so until he got his ancestor's title. Why should you be so astonished? Didn't you know that he was in London?"

"Yes, ma'am," said Pina, unable to recover from her astonishment; "but London is a biggish willage, and I didn't expect to see him, much less hear him called Killchristian. Howsever, I think, begging of your pardon, ma'am, as the name suits him very well. 'Deed it's much of a muchness with the other name, for I reckon as lions kills Christians, and eats 'em too, whenever they get a chance!"

"Pina, you hurt me when you speak in that way of Lenny's father." (A less gentle spirit would have said to her servant "you *offend* me." But Drusilla had much more tenderness than dignity in her nature and manners.)

"I am sorry, ma'am. Indeed, ma'am, I would rather

bite off the end of my tongue than let it say anything to hurt you," replied Pina.

"Now notice then, my good girl. It may happen that you may see Mr. Lyon some time when you are out with little Lenny. If you should, you must not avoid him. On the contrary, take the child to him. It will be good to promote affection between the child and his father."

"I will do as you say, ma'am."

Drusilla then went into the parlor to join her friends at dinner. But she said nothing of Lenny's adventure

"This evening," said General Lyon, "we go to old classic Drury Lane. And to-morrow for the Derby."

Drusilla's heart beat—but her only, or at least her chief object in going to the Derby was not to see the great race, but to see perhaps—her beloved husband.

CHAPTER XV.

THE DERBY.

I have set my life upon a cast,
And I will abide the hazard of the die—SHAKESPEARE.

"OH, it is drizzling! I wonder if it is not always drizzling in this whimpering climate," grumbled Anna, as she met Drusilla in their private parlor very early on the morning of the Derby Day.

"It is but a light drizzle; it will not hurt us and it may clear off," suggested Drusilla, hopefully

"All ready, my darlings? That is right, for we must make an early start if we wish to get a good position on the hill. I don't know that reserved places are ever taken in advance for the Derby; but I do know that *we* have not secured any. Ring for breakfast, Anna, my child, and let us have it over. But where is Dick?" inquired the General, as he joined his young people.

"He has stepped around to the livery stable to make sure of the barouche we engaged. He will be back in a few minutes," replied Anna.

"He might have left that to the servants; but Dick can't keep out of a stable, if only he has the faintest shadow of an excuse to go into one. Well—he might go

into worse places," said the General, just as the absentee returned.

"A strong, well sprung, capacious barouche and a fine pair of horses! Altogether as good a turn-out as is to be had for love or money," said Dick, as he threw himself into a chair.

"But what is that you have there?" inquired the General, pointing to a well-sized parcel rolled up in tissue paper which Mr. Hammond carried in his hands.

"This! Oh, this contains our veils," answered Dick, unrolling the parcel and displaying yards of blue, green, mauve, brown and gray barège.

"Our—*what?*"

"Veils for the Derby. I saw other fellows buying veils and they told me it was the usual thing to keep off the dust, you know. There, Anna, there's a blue one for you. Needn't take the trouble to hem it; nobody does; it is only to be used for one occasion, and is never fit for anything else afterwards. Here, Drusa, you may have the green one; and little Lenny the mauve; and now, uncle, here are two—a gray and a brown, for you and me. I thought you would like a subdued color best, as I do. We are to tie them around our hats," said Dick, offering the choice of the remaining veils to the General.

The veteran soldier laughed and shook his head.

"But, uncle, every gentleman wears a veil."

"Nonsense, Dick! somebody has been selling you."

"Indeed, no, they were all buying veils and fastening them on to their hats."

"Then I'll be hanged if I make myself ridiculous by wearing a veil like a girl."

"Well, then, you'll get yourself blinded, deafened, stupefied and suffocated by the dust—eyes, ears, nostrils and bronchial tubes will all be filled."

"I should like to know where the dust is to come from on such a day as this? Do you see how it is raining?"

"Don't know, sir! only know what the fellows here tell me."

"They are quizzing you, as I said before, that's my opinion."

While he spoke the door was opened and Mr. Spencer and Mr. Tredegar were announced.

These were two young Americans, who had been fellow-students with Dick Hammond, and whom the General had met on the day before and invited to breakfast and to go to the Derby with his party.

After bowing to the ladies and shaking hands with the gentlemen, the new-comers took the seats offered them, and commenced upon the all-engrossing subject of the hour.

"Fine day for the Derby, sir!" said Mr. Spencer, who had been three years in London attached to the American Minister's *suite*, and might be supposed to be posted on the subject. "Very fine day for the Derby."

"Fine day! Why, do you see how it is raining?" demanded the General, in surprise.

"Drizzling, sir, drizzling; just enough to lay the dust."

"Dust! ah! by the way that reminds me! Here is a lunatic has brought an assortment of veils, and he says we must each wear one—men and women both."

"Oh, yes, sir—the regular thing, you know, like the train at court. It is to protect the wearer from the smothering dust."

"But," said the General, frowning, "as I was just asking my nephew when you came in, where is the dust to come from on such a day as this?"

"Oh, sir, it may clear up by the time we shall be coming home. And it is in the home-coming we raise the sirocco. We must be prepared for the worst."

"Worst? Do you call clear weather the worst?"

"The worst possible for the Derby, sir. But this is a truth that you will never be able to believe until you see it demonstrated. And you will probably see it done to-day."

As they talked, the waiter came in to lay the cloth for breakfast.

Watching his opportunity, he presently came to General Lyon, and said, in a low, respectful voice:

"Beg pardon, sir, but would you like to have a luncheon put up to take with you?"

"Eh? Yes, certainly," replied the General, at the same time turning towards his young visitors a comically appealing look, as much as to say:

"You see even this waiter knows me to be a greenhorn."

"What would you please order, sir?" inquired John.

"Eh?—oh, anything at all! something nice and tidy"

"Pigeon-pie, sir, if you please?"

"Spencer, is pigeon-pie the regular thing?" said the General, winking at his friend.

"I believe it is *one* of the regular things. Derby Day without pigeon-pie would be—an incomplete arrangement."

"Well, Spencer, my dear boy, as you are posted, please receive my carte blanche to order all the 'regular things,' and everything else that is comfortable."

Young Spencer nodded and laughed; took from the General's hand a card and a pencil, and made out a liberal list which he handed to the waiter, saying:

"See that all these articles are put into clean hampers, and stowed away in the boxes of the General's barouche."

The man left the room with the list, and returned with the breakfast tray.

And the family party and their visitors sat down to the table.

Anna presided.

"Where is my god-son?" inquired the General, discontented at the absence of his favorite.

"He had his breakfast in my room, an hour ago, so that he might be got ready to go with us," said Drusilla.

"Ah! yes, well, I suppose under the circumstances it was as well," admitted the General.

Before they had done breakfast, however, Master Lenny was led in by his nurse.

He was resplendent in holiday attire and in the anticipation of some unknown glory that had been promised him, and for which he saw great preparations going forward, and which he called in his baby babble "doin' Dubby."

"Doin' Dubby, untle dranpa! Lenny doin' Dubby, hee hos wun," he said, running up to his godfather.

"Lenny is going to the Derby to see the horses run, is he? But Lenny will be the winning horse, I'll bet," said the General,taking the little fellow up on his knee. "Gentlemen," he added, turning to his young visitors, "let me

introduce you to Master Leonard Lyon, the latest representative of old Leonard Lyon, who——"

"'Came over with the Conqueror,'" suggested Mr. Tredegar.

"Who lived here long before the Conqueror was born," concluded the General, quietly. "Leonard, my boy, bow to the gentlemen, and ask them how they do, and say that you hope they are well."

"Hope.—*Do Dubby*," said Lenny, who could not connect his sentences very well as yet, holding out his chubby hand to Mr. Spencer, who was nearest.

"Grandpa, we will leave Lenny to help you entertain your friends while we put on our bonnets and mantles," said Anna, rising from the table, followed by Drusilla.

"And so Master Leonard is going to the Derby? He is beginning life early,—he is a very fast young gentleman," said Mr. Tredegar, taking the child upon his knee.

"Lenny doin' Dubby—hee hos wun," was the stereotyped answer of the boy.

But he was taken from one by the other, and prattled sociably to all until the return of the ladies dressed for their drive.

"Now, Mr. Spencer, you are not in earnest about these veils? I am not to decorate Dick's and grandpa's hats with them, am I?" laughed Anna, lifting the light cloud-like pile of barège.

"Oh, no; not just yet! not until they shall be required. It has ceased drizzling, but the ground is still too damp for dust. They can be rolled up and put into their pockets until wanted."

"Here, grandpa, here is yours," said Anna, rolling up the gray veil lightly, and handing it.

"No, thank you, my dear. Dust or no dust, I am not going to wear a veil. I would just as soon wear a crinoline!"

"Put it in your own pocket, my dear Mrs. Hammond, and have it ready for him when he will want it. He will be glad enough to get it by-and-by," said Francis Tredegar.

Anna took his advice.

"And now are we all quite ready?" inquired the General.

"Quite," answered everybody else.

"Then, come!"

And he took Drusilla's hand, and drew it within his arm and led the way down-stairs.

A large, open barouche, with a fine pair of horses, stood waiting the General's family. A jaunty gig with a spirited horse awaited the two young gentlemen.

Drusilla and Anna were handed into the back seat. The General sat in front, and by his side sat Pina with little Lenny. Dick perched himself up beside the driver. Jacob rode behind. The two young men were in their gig.

The party started—the General's barouche taking the lead.

The drizzling rain had ceased and the clouds were dispersing before a light wind.

The streets of London, always crowded, were now thronged; but with this difference also,—that nine-tenths of the people's faces and the horses' heads were turned in one direction, and everybody,—man, woman, and child, saint and sinner,—was becoming more and more intoxicated; and not with spirituous or fermented liquors, but with the Derby Day. Crowded carriages of all descriptions, saddle-horses, donkeys, and foot-passengers of all ranks and sexes, thronged the streets; and talk and laughter, calls and shouts resounded through the air. It looked as if London were suddenly being evacuated by its whole population, and the people were making a merry joke of the matter. And all were pouring towards the south-western suburb.

In such a throng the progress of our party was necessarily very slow, yet with none of the *tedium* of a slow progress. The great crowd of people and of vehicles going all one way; the variety of individuals and characters; the total abandonment of all reserve; the hailings and the chaffings; the jests and the snatches of song; the grotesque decorations of some of the horses and carriages, and even of some of the people; the perfect novelty of the scene; and the exhilaration of all animated creatures that composed it, made every step of the progress charming to the unaccustomed minds and eyes of our new-comers.

Drusilla and Anna were delighted. Little Lenny shouted. Pina was not a whit behind them in her ec-

stasies. Old General Lyon's eyes twinkled and lips smiled, and sometimes he broke into a good hearty laugh. As for Dick, the oldest Derby goer on the road could not have got ahead of him in bandying back the jokes that were bandied at him on the way. Only that Jacob, hanging on behind, stared with "all his eyes," and looked as if he thought he was enjoying a pleasant sort of nightmare.

"I say, you jolly old howl (owl)," called a cockney from a neighboring carriage to General Lyon, "where did you get that gorilla you've got perched up behind there, heh?"

"From a country where they muzzle monkeys sometimes," retorted Dick, answering for the General.

So it went on.

"But this is nothing at all to what it will be when we are out of London and fairly on to the Epsom road," shouted Henry Spencer from his gig behind.

"I never saw the Carnival at Rome; but I should think it was not very unlike this," said the General.

"This is the Carnival of London! Old Rome has its Saturnalia; modern Rome has its Carnival; America has her Independence Day; but England has her Derby, equal to all these others rolled into one," said Francis Tredegar.

"If this is only the beginning it is worth crossing the Atlantic to see—not the Derby race only, but the Derby Day!" said the General.

"Only wait till you get to Epsom!" exclaimed Henry Spencer.

Once fairly upon the Epsom road, our friends found it as their guests had predicted. The crowd, great as it had been before, was even greater now. And it thickened with every mile; the numbers of passengers increasing twofold, tenfold, a hundred-fold, as they approached the bourne of their journey.

The road was as one vast river of human beings and brute creatures, pouring its multitudes towards Epsom. And every cross country road was as a tributary stream helping to swell the flood.

Every description of wheeled vehicles known to the civilized world—broughams, barouches, landaus, chaises,

buggies, sulkies, gigs, rockaways, carryalls, omnibuses, stages, brakes, carts, drags, wagons, jaunting cars, in an endless number and variety, and drawn by every available species of quadrupeds—horses, mules, donkeys, goats, dogs, oxen—thronged and crushed and pressed together for miles and miles behind and before on the main road and up and down every branch road—crowding toward Epsom.

In this vast, moving mixed multitude the only saving feature was this, that they were all moving the same way, and all, or nearly all, in high, good humor.

Pressed on all sides as they were—behind, before, on the right and on the left, our friends in the barouche and their young guests in the gig, managed to keep together; —sometimes brought to a standstill, sometimes moving on at the rate of an inch a minute.

"Now you understand why it was necessary to start so early, though Epsom is but fourteen miles from London, and though the great race does not come off before two o'clock," called out young Spencer.

"Yes; and I begin to see the wisdom of those who went down to Epsom last night to avoid all this," answered the general.

"Ah, but they were either old stagers who had experienced this sort of thing many times before, or else individuals who had some deep stake in the races to come off to-day. For my own part, I enjoy the going and returning—the 'road,' in short, quite as much as anything else appertaining to the great Derby Day."

"It is a novel and interesting sight, in its contrasts if in nothing else," replied the General, glancing from the handsome barouche decorated with a duke's coronet painted on its panels, and occupied by an aristocratic party of stately men and elegant women, in splendid apparel, that crowded him on the right—to the old dilapidated omnibus, filled within and without with the ragged refuse of the London streets and alleys, which pressed him on the left.

But truth to tell, the ragamuffins seemed the merrier, if not the richer party of the two.

And many jests flew over General Lyon's head between the Bohemians in the old omnibus and a young member of the ducal family who occupied a seat on the box be-

side the coachman. For that one day "free-born Britons" of every rank enjoyed something like liberty and equality—not to say unbridled license.

"Hey day! What's the matter now?" exclaimed the General, as the whole immense march, with much rearing and plunging of quadrupeds, came to a dead halt.

"There's a lock at the turnpike gate, sir," called out a vagrant from the old 'bus.

"A lock on the toll-gate! It's a shame," replied the innocent old gentleman; "the gate should never be locked in the daytime, and most especially on such a day as this, when they must keep such a vast multitude of people waiting while they unlock it."

This speech was greeted by a burst of ironical applause from all the occupants of the old omnibus, as well as from all others who heard it. They laughed at the speaker and chaffed him.

"You change all that when you get into parliament," sang out one.

"I say! what's your name, you jolly old soul? Is it old King Cole?" inquired another.

Then all in the old omnibus sang out together:

"Old King Cole was a jolly old soul,
And a jolly old soul was he—
He called for his bottle, and he called for his bowl,
And he called for his comrades three!"

"Dick, what the deuce have I said wrong? What do they mean?" inquired the General, much annoyed at finding himself the center of observation.

"You have said nothing wrong, and they mean nothing offensive. It is the Derby Day! That accounts for all, don't you see?" answered Dick, laughing.

"But about the lock. They were chaffing me about *that*."

"Oh, you know that there is *now* more than one lock at every turnpike gate. There is the legitimate lock under the charge of the keeper; and there is a lock of interlocked carriage wheels, reaching, perhaps, for ten miles along the road."

"I knew once a lock of fourteen miles long, all caused by an ill conditioned fellow in a brougham, who stopped

the way at the toll-gate for twenty minutes, disputing about his change," said the young gentleman who was seated beside the coachman on the right-hand carriage; for on this latitudinarian day English reserve was laid aside, and strangers spoke together as familiar friends.

But the General's fine barouche was the center of observation just now, and all on account of the General's "gorilla footman," as the Bohemians called young Jacob.

Unluckily for his peace to-day, Jacob, with one of the best hearts in the world, and a tolerably good brain, possessed all the peculiar features of his race. He had the low, receding forehead, broad, flat nose, wide, full lips, and small, retiring chin, jet black skin, and crisp, woolly hair of the pure Guinea negro—all of which was likely to render him an object of great amusement to the malicious crowd, and annoyance to his master and friends.

"I say, old cove, you show it free now, like the circus men do the clowns when they go in procession; but how much are you going to charge a head to see it when you get it in a booth on Epsom Heath?" called out one.

"Marster!" cried Jacob, half crying and ready to swear —"Marster! only let me, and I'll jump down and lick the lot of 'em!"

"Oh, I say, fellows, it can talk!" cried another.

"Let me at 'em!" begged Jacob.

"Nonsense, my boy! You'd get trampled to death under the horses' feet before you could grapple with any of them. They mean no harm. It is the Derby Day. Give them back as good as they send."

"But I haven't got it in me," sobbed Jake.

"Oh! yes you have. Let 'em have it!"

But Jake's idea of "letting 'em have it" was of a more substantial sort than mere words. Stooping down, he armed himself with a couple of ale bottles, and flourishing one in each hand, he threatened one and all of his aggressors.

"Eh! eh! is it growing vicious?" called out some one with a shout of laughter.

The ale bottle flew from Jake's right hand and knocked off the hat of the speaker.

"Oh, I say! look here! none of that now, you know! that's carrying things a little too far even for the Derby

Day!" exclaimed the bare-headed individual, groping in vain for his hat, but keeping his good humor.

"Oh! see here, governor! Here's your ape getting dangerous! chain it hup before it 'urts some un!" sang out another.

Away flew the other ale bottle and struck this counsellor in the chest and knocked him heels over head.

"Hi! ho! here! where's the police!" called out a half score of voices.

But the police were not forthcoming, and the floored man picked himself up, laughing merrily and saying good-humoredly:

"Boys, we're getting the worst of it! Better let the gorilla alone!"

But the General turned to his coachman, frowning.

"Jacob. I am ashamed of you! Here's a set of poor fellows out for their rare holiday chaffing you a little with harmless words, and you answer them with hard blows!"

"You told me to 'let 'em have it,'" muttered Jake.

"But not in *blows*; in *words*, you stupid fellow!"

"I couldn't answer 'em so."

"But suppose they retorted in kind? They can throw missiles as well as you can."

"They are welkim!" grumbled Jake.

"What, and hurt and maybe kill the ladies? Jake I'm more ashamed of you than ever."

A commotion in the crowd ahead, a gradual unloosening of the lock of wheels, warned our travelers that the way was clear, and carriages of all sorts moved on, at first slowly, and then as the throng thinned more rapidly, until it began to look like the multitudinous race of fast trotting horses in harness on the Bloomingdale Road.

And the quiet "chaffing" became hilarious shouting as one after another of fast drivers distanced all competitors. And now indeed the Derby dust arose in clouds like the sirocco of the desert until every man and mother's son had to put on a veil.

Old General Lyon resisted the fate as long as he could, until, as Harry Spencer had predicted, his eyes, ears nostrils and bronchial tubes were all so much obstructed that he was nearly blinded, deafened, suffocated and

overwhelmed. Then he let Anna dust off his face and head with an extra pocket-handkerchief, and tie a gray veil about his hat, as they drove on.

"I wish some sort of a veil could be contrived to protect these hedges," said Anna, pointing to the boundaries of the road on the right and left. "It is a sin to cover these lovely green hedges with a thick coat of dust. But, oh, grandpa! look, there's poetry for you! look at that sign!"

The old gentleman turned and smiled to see a rural looking wayside inn, embowered in creeping vines and running roses, and overshadowed by trees, and bearing the inscription in two lines of rhyme:

"Good Beer
Sold Here."

A little group of foot passengers to the Derby were sitting on a bench under a spreading tree, testing the qualities of the said "good beer."

This and many other simple little way sidescenes, illustrative of English rural roadside life, which the occasional opening of the crowd allowed them to catch a glimpse of, remained as pleasant pictures in the gallery of memory to contemplate in after-days.

They were now ascending a graduated hill; when they reached its summit they were comparatively free from the crowd. The carriages before them had gone rapidly on downward; the carriages behind them were coming slowly up.

"Order your coachman to draw up here, General. We are near Epsom, and from this rising ground, by standing up in your carriage and using your field-glass, you may take a bird's-eye view of Epsom Hill and Heath, with its surroundings," said Mr. Tredegar, adding example to precept by stopping his own horse.

The General gave orders in accordance with this advice, and then mounted on his seat, and levelled his field-glass.

"Good Heavens!" he exclaimed, in his unbounded amazement.

Under his eyes lay a scene of its kind not to be equalled in this world.

There were from four to five hundred thousand people of all ranks, sexes, ages, and conditions,—some with their horses, carriages, and liveried servants; others with their donkey-carts, and tents, and wares for sale; others again with only their own weary limbs and haggard faces, and fluttering rags,—all gathered together on the hill and heath of Epsom, or pressing thither by every highway leading from every point of the compass.

"I never expected to see such a crowd this side of the Judgment-day!" said General Lyon, as he resigned the glass to Anna and assisted her to rise on the seat.

Anna gazed long and thoughtfully at the wonderful scene, and then she said:

"But it reminds one of the Judgment-day in something else beside its great crowd—here, as on that coming day, saint and sinner, prince and beggar stand together as they will stand there! It is an exciting and a depressing scene, grandpa," she said, as she restored the glass and resumed her seat.

Drusilla next arose to take a view. And she was no doubt as deeply impressed by the vastness of the multitude assembled before her as her uncle and cousin had been, but her chief thought was still,

"How shall I ever be able to catch a glimpse of my Alick in such a boundless crowd as this?"

Dick was standing by her side, using his own field-glass.

"Worth crossing the ocean to see, is it not, Drusa?" he asked.

"Yes; even though we know little of horses, and less of races, and least of all which is likely to win the Derby."

"'Fairy Queen,' is the favorite, I believe."

"What did you say, Dick?"

"I say Mr. Chisholm Cheke's 'Fairy Queen' is the favorite!"

"What favorite? Whose favorite?"

"Tut, Drusa! Why the favorite of the turf, of the stables, and of the betting men! The horse upon whose success the most money is staked, the one that is expected to win the Derby!"

"But if everybody knows which horse is likely to win the Derby, why does any one ever bet on any other?"

"Ah! that I can't tell," said Dick, shrugging his shoulders. "Only this,—the favorite does not *always* win, in fact *seldom* does, I think; it is generally some dark horse that wins the race."

"Dark horse? Do the dark ones run better than the light ones?"

"Oh, Drusa, what a novice you are, my child! I don't mean a dark-colored horse; I mean a horse kept dark, *perdu*, in retirement, that nobody talks about or hears about, except certain knowing ones."

"And does the dark horse always win?"

"No, not always, but often; sometimes some intermediate, honest horse, that is neither bragged about on the one hand, nor 'kept dark' on the other, surprises everybody by winning the race, and also occasionally the favorite wins."

"Well, we will not bet; we are all conscientiously opposed to betting; but if we were not, we should stake our money upon the dark horse. But how would we know him?"

"We shouldn't know him at all; none but the few in the secret would know him."

"Come, come, my children, we are being left behind," said the General, impatiently.

"And I do not care much for the winning horse, and that is the truth. But I care a great deal for the human interest in this vast scene! Will the Derby ever go down and pass away, like the other glories of this world? And will we say to our great grandchildren in the Derby of their days: 'Ah, you should have seen the Derby as it was when we were young!' Shall we talk so to our descendants, Dick?"

"Goodness knows! The Derby may continue to increase in importance; it ought to do so; I hope it may," replied Dick, as he resumed his seat.

Jacob started his horses and they drove down the hill at a very rapid rate.

On each side of the road were now to be seen the dustbrown tents of the gypsy wanderers; the decorated booths of the showmen; the tempting fruit-stalls of the costermongers; and among them all, groups of country people and knots of cockneys, and all the heterogeneous

assembly of bipeds and quadrupeds that on the Derby Day infest the neighborhood of Epsom.

Slowly making their way through all these, our party reached and passed the first barrier (for Epsom Heath is divided off into circles, the entrance to each succeeding one towards the hill or the Grand Stand, commanding a higher and higher price).

Our friends found themselves upon the heath, that was occupied by very much the same sort of crowd which had obstructed the roads leading hither. It was dotted all over by gipsies' tents, fruit-stalls, refreshment-stands, costermongers' carts, and so forth, and so forth, and animated by idlers, loafers, peddlers, ballad-singers, image-boys, fortune-tellers, "confidence" men, and women, thieves, gamblers, and, in short, every variety of the lower order of human nature.

Passing through all these—passing barrier after barrier, and circle after circle, our party at last found themselves upon the fine breezy and commanding hill, which was comparatively free from the crowd, and occupied only by the carriages of the nobility and gentry, filled with fair women and well-behaved men.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE GIPSIES.

"Theirs is the deep lore of the olden time,
And in it are fine mysteries of the stars
Solved with a cunning wisdom, and strange thoughts,
Half prophecy, half poetry, and dreams
Clearer than truth, and speculations wild
That touched the secrets of your very soul."

The General and his friends selected the best front sites that were left vacant, and had their carriages turned around and the horses taken from them and led away to distant stalls and fodder.

Then all reseated themselves and looked around them.

What a sight! what a crowd! what a turmoil! Far as the eye could reach on every side a turbulent sea of humanity!

Where could the people all have sprung from? Had

London emptied itself of its population upon Epsom Heath? Had Paris, St. Petersburg and all the great continental cities contributed their thousands? Had earth given up her dead and ocean her prey to swell this crowd?

At first, as I said, all seemed but a turbulent sea of human beings; but gradually individual images came out of the confusion.

Most prominent among these was the Grand Stand, an elevated and railed platform or gallery where the gamblers in horseflesh congregated to make up their betting-books and watch the race.

And most interesting, especially to ladies, was the Royal Box, with its cushioned seats, surmounted by its crown and canopy of state all in burning scarlet and gold. Neither the queen nor any of the princesses occupied the Royal Box; only three or four of the princes, with their lords in waiting, were present.

Yet toward that box many field-glasses were leveled—Anna's among the rest, for—

> "A substitute shines brightly as a king,
> Until a king be by."

And failing the queen's presence, the queen's sons were objects of absorbing interest.

"Neither Victoria nor any of the princesses are here," said Anna, lowering her glass with a look of disappointment.

"The queen nor the princesses ever come to the Derby. You may see them at the Ascot Races, however, which are considered more aristocratic, though very much less famous and popular than these," replied Mr. Spencer, who had left his seat in the gig to come and stand beside General Lyon's barouche and talk to the young people.

Anna next criticized the splendid dresses of the ladies who filled the open carriages on this hill; and for no occasion do ladies dress more splendidly than for the Derby Day.

"Good gracious! Half the milliners and jewelers' establishments in London and Paris must be emptied of their contents," she exclaimed, as her eyes roved over the various and dazzling display.

Out from the seething mass of humanity on the heath

below came other individual pictures. Here and there a poor little pale, hollow-cheeked boy creeping feebly along and peering hungrily about for stray crusts and bones, or apple parings, and orange peel, dropped from the luncheon hamper of some prosperous feeder; now and then some grandly beautiful woman whose flaunting dress and insolent air proclaimed her a very far fallen angel; here and there some sunny-eyed child of Italy picking up a few pennies by singing the "wild songs of his dear native land," and everywhere a leather-visaged gipsy crone trying to improve her own fortunes by telling other people's; everywhere professors of all sorts of irregular arts and sciences; everywhere traders in all kinds of contraband goods and chattels; and everywhere were the "efficient police force" trying very successfully not to keep order; trying very hard not to interfere with the lawful or unlawful practices of the poor, on this one gracious day of their license and their happiness. A pickpocket, if detected, would be arrested, of course; but as for the rest, gipsies might tell fortunes, and beggars beg, and starving little children pilfer, with none to punish them less merciful than the All-Father.

There was so much to see! such an infinite variety of life! The Derby race, though the greatest feature of the day, was not a thousandth part of the sights. If no race had come off, the assembly itself was well worth coming to see, and sitting through a whole day to study.

Anna, Drusilla and General Lyon, were well content to occupy their seats and spend their time in calmly contemplating the scene before them.

But the three young men, Dick, Spencer and Tredegar, wished to mingle with the active life below, and so, making an excuse to go and get cards of the race they bowed and left the hill and soon disappeared in the crowd on the heath.

Many other gentlemen who were in attendance upon the ladies on the hill, also left their carriages and went down; others who had been down were now coming up; —so that there was a continual moving about of foot-passengers.

"Look, look, Drusilla! there is a gipsy telling fortunes at that carriage next but one to us, on the left. Grandpa,

when she has finished there, do beckon her *to* come here!" eagerly exclaimed Anna.

"Nonsense, my child! you never want the crone to tell your fortune."

"Oh, yes, but I do indeed!" exclaimed Anna, excitedly.

"Tut, tut! you don't believe in such tomfoolery!"

"No, I don't believe in it of course; but I want to hear what the gipsy will have to say to me for all that. Do watch her, grandpa; and, as soon as she has done with those ladies call her here. Consider, I never saw a gipsy except upon the stage—never saw a real gipsy in my life before, and may never have a chance of seeing one again. Oh, do call her here, grandpa, as soon as she is at liberty!"

"Well, well, my dear, you have the right to make a goose of yourself if you please, and I will help you to do so. I will beckon her presently."

"Ah, there's Dick come back! Dick, come here, I want you!" called Anna.

And Dick, who had left his companions among their betting friends and returned to the hill alone, now came up to the carriage.

"Dick, I'm so glad you've come back! There's a gipsy telling fortunes at that carriage—I want you to bring her here to tell ours."

"Absurdity, Anna dear! you cannot mean to countenance such impostors?"

"Oh, Dick, that is so uncharitable! How do you know they are impostors? How do you know but that they believe in their own art?"

"Do *you* believe in it?"

"No; but I want to have some fun out of the gipsy."

"Very will; I consent provided it is meant in jest and not in earnest."

"And here, Dick, let us put the gipsy's powers to a test. You come in and sit down by me—then take little Lenny in your arms and play papa. Little Lenny being fair and flaxen-haired and blue-eyed, with all the Lyon features, is much more like me than like his own mother whom in truth he does not at all resemble, and he will easily be taken for ours. And the more easily because you and I look as if we had reached years of discretion, while Dru-

silla seems but a child. Let us play a trick on the gipsy, and ask her to foretell *our* boy's future."

"Ha! ha! ha! that will be good!"

Not one word of the conversation since Dick's return did Drusilla hear—with her field-glass raised to her eyes, she was gazing at a particular point on the Grand Stand; for, even in that boundless crowd, her love had discovered her Alick—but, ah, discovered him among the desperate gamblers of the betting ring!

She was blind and deaf to everything else.

Meanwhile the gipsy had drawn something nearer to the General's barouche. She was in fact standing beside the very next carriage, trying to wheedle the occupants to have their fortunes told; but they all—a circle of demure women—sternly warned the sibyl off and threatened her with the police, at which she laughed and shook her crisp, black curls.

"The police would not trouble a poor gipsy wife like herself," she said.

Then General Lyon bent over the side of his barouche, and showing her a broad, silver crown, said:

"Come here, good woman, and tell these young ladies' fortunes."

"Ah, Heaven bless your handsome face, kind gentleman but I would like to tell *yours*, too, for a fine fortune it has been, and is, and is to be!" said the gipsy coming up to the carriage.

She was a small, slight woman, lithe and graceful like all her race, with a swarthy and somewhat wrinkled face; with deep-set, brilliant black eyes; crisply curling, tendril-like black hair; and well-marked black eyebrows. She did not wear the traditional red cloak and plaid head kerchief—those have long passed away even from among her tribe but she wore rather tawdry and shabby finery—a striped skirt, a black shawl, a straw bonnet trimmed with ribbons and flowers of many colors, red predominating. And, upon the whole, her appearance was picturesque and pleasing. Neither did she address her dupes in the poetic language of the ideal gipsy—her words and manner were as real as herself.

"God save you, fair gentlemen! God save you, sweet ladies! Shall the poor gipsy tell your fortunes? I see

good luck in *your* face, pretty lady! I see great good luck! Give the poor gipsy a little, little bit of silver to cross your hand with, and she will look and see what the great good fortune is that is in store for you. Do, pretty lady," she pleaded in a very sweet, soft, wheedling tone as she held out her hand to Anna.

Mrs. Hammond dropped a shilling in her palm and, smiling, said:

"My fortune is already told, good woman, but I want you to foretell the future of my dear little son here." And she lifted Lenny from Dick's arms to her own lap.

Drusilla with a half-suppressed exclamation, now looked around.

But Anna gave her a comically beseeching look, and she yielded the point and turned away.

The gipsy seemed not to notice this little by-play. She stood with her hands folded upon her breast and her eyes fixed upon the ground.

"Come, gipsy! look upon my little son here and read his future," said Anna.

The gipsy woman raised her glittering black eyes, and, smiling, shook her tendril-like black curls and said:

"Ah, pretty, fair lady! You think the poor gipsy can tell what is *to come*, yet is so blind she cannot see what is *now!*—no!"

"What do you mean, good woman?"

"The boy is not your son, sweet lady."

"Not my son! Why, look at him! He is the very image of me!"

"He is very like you, pretty lady; and that shows him to be of your race; but he is not your son."

"How do you know that?" questioned Anna, beginning to wonder at the woman's knowledge.

"By my art. You have no son, sweet lady. You will never have a son; but——"

"Oh, don't tell me that, gipsy! I didn't give you a shilling to purchase bad news."

"A sovereign will not buy good news unless it is true, pretty lady; and the gipsy's words are true. I was going to tell you, though you have no son, you will have many fair daughters, who will live and grow up and marry and

bear many fine sons, who will grow up and be great men in the land."

"This is foretelling the long future with a notable blessing!" laughed Anna. "But I wish you had promised these fine sons to me instead of to my future daughters. I don't care anything about those very shadowy young ladies. I don't know them."

The gipsy turned to Dick, and with her musical whine pleaded:

"Kind, handsome gentleman, do cross the poor gipsy wife's hand with a little, little bit of silver, for telling all about your wife's daughters and daughters' sons, who will be rulers in the land beyond the sea."

"How do you know that lady is my wife?" inquired Dick, much astonished.

"Ah! good gentleman, can the gipsy know the future and not know the present? Now, kind, handsome gentleman, give the poor gipsy a bit of silver for good luck—the poor gipsy, sweet gentleman! who sees such great, good fortune for you, and none at all for herself!"

"Then she is no true seeress, or she would see this piece of good fortune coming to her," said Dick, as in the largeness of his heart and the extravagance of his habits he put into the gipsy's hands the great American gold coin, the double eagle, worth nearly five sovereigns.

The gipsy had never seen such a coin in her life. It inspired her, and for once she broke into something like poetry.

"Ah, noble gentleman! you have made the poor gipsy rich and happy. Ah! kind gentleman, may the stars rain down blessings on your head as bright as their own beams! May flowers spring up under your footsteps wherever you tread! May——"

"Dick!" laughed Anna, breaking into the discourse and cutting short the rhapsody, "I shall lend you out to some of our old neighbors to walk their barren gardens into bloom!"

"Come," said Dick, to change the subject—"come, gipsy, tell my little cousin's fortune here. Will she live to grow up and get married?"

The gipsy turned at his bidding and looked at Drusilla

whose childlike face might have deceived eyes less keenly penetrating than those of the gipsy seeress.

"Cross the poor gipsy's hand with a little, little bit of silver, sweet lady, and let her tell your fortune, my lady? The gipsy sees rare good luck in your pretty face, my lady!" said the woman, in a wheedling tone.

What young creature, unsatisfied and with a deep heart stake in life, is not in some degree a prey to superstition and credulity?—is not in secret a would-be diviner of dreams, interpreter of omens, consulter of the stars, reader of the future? The restless, longing, impatient heart cannot wait the slow revelations of time; it would, with rash hand, rend aside the veil and know the worst or best at once.

So it was with Drusilla now. She dropped a silver crown in the gipsy's hand, and then, half in faith and half in scorn of that misplaced faith, she held out her palm.

The gipsy glanced slightly at the palm, but gazed earnestly in the face of the young matron.

"My lady, you have been a wife and you are a mother, you have had trouble—long trouble for so short a life, and a great trouble for so gentle a lady; but it is gone now, and it will never come back any more."

"Thank Heaven for that," murmured Drusilla.

"But you are not satisfied yet. There is something wanted, my lady. You have a hungry, hungry heart, and a begging eye. You are longing and famishing for something, my lady, and you will get it; for the hungry heart is a mighty heart, and must prevail; and the begging eye is a conquering eye that will overcome. Sweet, my lady, grief has gone away, never to come back to you; and joy will soon come, never to leave you."

"Oh, if I were sure that were true. If I could only believe that!" exclaimed Drusilla, earnestly.

"You may believe it, my lady. You will soon see it."

"How do you know it?"

"By my art," answered the gipsy.

And then she turned to General Lyon and said, coaxingly:

"Ah! kind, handsome gentleman, you will cross the poor gipsy's hand with a little silver to help her, poor thing, and she will tell you such a good fortune!"

"My fortune is all told these many years past, good woman," said the General, with a sigh that did not escape the gipsy's keen eyes.

"Ah! don't say so, good, dear gentleman. You have many long and happy years of life to live yet."

"I am an old man, gipsy; I have lived out my life."

"Ah no, noble gentleman, not so. You are in your prime. Ah me! with your grand form and handsome face, you could make many a sweet, pretty lady's heart ache yet if you chose; yes, that you could."

"Come, come, my good woman, that is going a little too far," laughed the General, not displeased. What old gentleman ever is with a little flattery?

"It is going a *great deal* too far, grandpa. Come now, don't let her be putting courtship and matrimony into your head. I won't have any young grandmamma set up at Old Lyon Hall to lord it over me," laughed Anna.

"Nonsense, my girl! The only way in which I may ever make any lady's heart ache, will be by getting the gout, and growing cross over it, and growling at you and Drusilla from morning until night," said the General.

At that moment a policeman stepped up and put his hand on the gipsy's shoulder, saying:

"Come, Gentilly, I have had my eye on you this half hour. Move on."

"Ah, bless the dear blue eyes of him," coaxed the fortune-teller, turning around and patting the man's cheeks, "he'll never make the poor old gipsy wife move on, now that she has come up to her luck—such luck, my darling. Only see what the grand, noble young gentleman has given the poor gipsy. When the race is over, come up to my tent, pet, and have a pot of porter and a plate of biled beef and carrots with his old mother," she added, patting him on the cheek again and turning from him.

"That's the way, you see, sir—that's always the way with Gentilly," said the policeman, apologetically, to the old gentleman.

"You know her?" inquired Dick.

"Know Gentilly? Bless you, sir, everybody on the racecourse knows Gentilly and her sister, Patience."

"And you know no harm of her, I dare say, although you are a police officer."

"Well, sir, beyond——"

"Now, he is not going to tell lies on the old gipsy!—It will be three o'clock. Come up at my tent for the biled beef and carrots and the pot of porter," said the fortune-teller, laying her hands upon the lips of the police officer.

At that moment the two young men stepped up.

Gentilly turned to them immediately.

"Tell your fortune, sweet young gentlemen? Cross the poor gipsy's hand with silver to tell your fortune."

"No, thank you," laughed Spencer. "I have had my fortune told by members of your tribe at least ten times to-day."

"But here's half a crown for you if you'll only go away and not bother," added Tredegar, dropping the coin into the gipsy's hand.

"Blessings on your handsome face, kind gentleman! Ah! I could tell you of a fair lady who is thinking of you," coaxed Gentilly.

"And thinking what a long-legged, lantern-jawed, lank-haired fright the Yankee boy is, no doubt. All right; you can tell me that another time; but go now and don't bother."

"Yes, Gentilly, you really must move on," added the policeman.

And the fortune-teller, having gleaned all that she could from the company, did move on.

And now an agitation like the movement of the wind upon the waves of the sea or the leaves of the forest swayed the vast multitude.

"What's the matter now?" inquired the General.

"The horses—they are coming," answered Spencer.

"Is it the great race? Are they going to start?"

"Not just yet. They are being brought out and walked around the course to be shown. Here they are!" exclaimed Tredegar.

All in the barouche stood up, adjusted their field-glasses and levelled them at the race-course that encircled the field.

About thirty of the very finest horses in the world, decorated, and ridden by small, light jockeys in parti-colored suits and fancy caps, came on in procession and trotted around the course. Some three years ago these horses

"the cream of the cream" of the horse nobility, had been bred and born to order, and from that time trained for this Derby—a most careful and costly preparation of three years for a trial that would be decided in half an hour. No wonder at the breathless interest they excited even among those who had no stake in the race.

Involuntary exclamations of admiration and delight burst from the ladies of our party.

"What beautiful creatures!" cried Anna.

"Pity they can't *all* win," added Drusilla.

The train of horses trotted out of their range of vision, and disappeared from view on another section of the circle.

"Is there time to lunch before the great race?" inquired Dick, with a hungry glance at the hampers.

"No, sir; they start in fifteen minutes," answered Tredegar.

Those fifteen minutes passed in silent waiting. Fortune-telling, small-trading, ballad-singing, eating and drinking—all were suspended until the trial upon which such immense stakes were laid should be over. It was a holiday,—a festival; yet the hush that preceded the great event of the day, was like the awful pause before an execution.

"At length the spell was broken. The word went forth:

"They're starting!"

Three hundred thousand people were on their feet in an instant.

"They're coming!"

Field-glasses were raised and necks were stretched, and eyes were strained.

"Here they are! Here they are!"

Yes, here they are. The flying train of meteors flashing past! They are gone while we look! Unaccustomed eyes cannot trace their flight, or distinguish one horse from another in the lightning-like passage. A moment more and the goal is won!

By whom?

It is not certainly known to the crowd just yet. They say:

"Lightfoot!"

"Wing!"

"Wonder!"

No, none of these. The number flies up on the winning post:

Number Seven!

And a thousand voices cry out:

"Fairy Queen!"

Yes, the favorite has won the race; and Mr. Chisholm Cheke has made his fortune. Some few others have won much money, and many have lost, and some are ruined.

Do not look towards the Grand Stand. The haggard faces of those ruined gamesters will haunt your dreams to your life's end.

It was wonderful how soon after the great act of this drama has been performed that the uncompromised crowd subsided into comparative calmness, and betook themselves again to their outside amusements—their small trading, fortune-telling, ballad-singing, et cetera, while waiting for the next race.

General Lyon ordered up his hampers, and his party had luncheon. After they had finished, the fragments of their feast were distributed to the little beggars that thronged around their carriage-wheels.

At four o'clock our party left the ground to return to London.

The evening drive back to London was attended with all the incidents of the morning drive to Epsom—a hundred-fold increased—the crowd was thicker, the crush closer, the noise louder, the dust higher, the danger greater.

Through all these, however, our party passed safely, and reached their apartments at the Morley House in time for an early tea.

CHAPTER XVII.

HOW THE PARTED MET.

They seemed to those who saw them most,
  The careless friends of every day,
Her smile was still serene and sweet,
  His courtesy was free and gay;
Yet if by one the other's name
  In some unguarded hour was heard,
The heart they deemed so cold and tame
Would flutter like a captured bird.—MONCTON MILNES.

A FEW days after the Derby, Anna and Drusilla sat in their private parlor at the hotel, waiting for the return of the General and Dick, who had gone out to keep an engagement with Francis Tredegar, but had promised to be back in time to take the ladies to the Tower.

Little Lenny was out with his nurse in the square.

The conversation between the two young women turned upon the gipsies.

"It is wonderful, their seeming powers of prophecy or second sight," said Anna.

"I wish I could know their skill to be second sight, since they prophesied to me such smooth things; but, in truth, I think it was only INSIGHT," replied Drusilla.

"'Insight?'"

"Nothing more."

"But how did she know that Lenny was not my son when I told her he was?"

"By that same gift of insight, which I think they cultivate to a great perfection. She read you, Anna—she saw through you. She knew by your manner that you were Dick's wife; but also that your bright face had never been clouded by a mother's cares."

"And by the same power she divined that *you* were both wife and mother."

"Yes; she looked in my face, not in my hand. They say that 'every face is a history, or a prophecy,'—certainly every face seems to be both to these skilful physiognomists, the gipsies."

"It is their insight, then, that gives them such knowledge of human nature?"

"Of course. They may be very ignorant of books, but they are very learned in men and women."

"You must have studied the gipsy while she was studying you."

"I did, Anna. I watched her and others of her tribe while they were telling fortunes. I saw their *in*sight gave them a *fore*sight that the ignorant and superficial might mistake for supernatural powers of second sight and prophecy. I saw how they worked. For instance, they know as a general fact that the wishes of the young run upon love; those of the middle-aged upon money and worldly success; those of the old upon long life. Therefore, to the young they always promise success in love; to the mature, success in money matters; to the aged, length of days. If they see a look of sorrow upon a young face, and no apparent cause, like a suit of deep mourning, for it, they will tell the dupe that he or she has been crossed in love, but that all will end well. If a look of care upon a middle-aged face, they will speak of monetary anxieties; but they will also promise a fortunate issue to the difficulty. If of weariness upon an old face, they will still talk of long and happy years to come. Moreover, they think since opposites usually attract each other, that it is safe to tell a blonde young lady that a dark young gentleman is thinking of her, and a brunette that her thoughts favor the attachment of a certain fair 'complected' gentleman; and generally they hit the truth."

"Yes, the rule most generally holds good. Witness Alick, Dick, you and me. Alick, a blonde, jilted me, another blonde, for you, a brunette. And I was very willing to be left free to marry my dark-haired Dick."

While Anna spoke the door opened and little Lenny entered, dragging in his nurse, and full of excitement.

"Man! man! div Lenny dit!" he exclaimed, holding out a silver whistle to view, and then putting it to his lips and blowing a shrill blast.

"Oh! oh! oh! goodness sake what lunatic gave the boy that? We shall be deafened!" exclaimed Anna, clapping her hands to her ears.

Drusilla trembled with pleasure, for she instinctively knew the donor of the whistle; but she smiled and lifted the boy in her arms, called Pina to follow, and went to her own room.

"Who gave it to him, Pina?" she asked, as soon as she had shut the door.

"His father, ma'am."

"Tell me all about it."

"We were walking around the square, when all of a sudden who should come up but Mr. Alick—I mean Lord Killpeople, as they call him here."

"Killcrichtoun, Pina."

"Well, Killchristians, ma'am; it's all the same, only worse, because of course it is much more devilisher, begging your pardon, ma'am, to kill Christians than it is to do to common people. Any ways, up he comes."

"And——What then? Go on."

"I didn't go in, ma'am, though I was minded to. I did as you directed me to do on such occasions. I stopped and made a curtsy, and handed little Lenny forward so as to place him in front of me facing of his father. And says he:

"'How do you do, Pina? When did you arrive? Whom did you come with?'

"And then, without waiting for me to answer them questions, he lifted up little Lenny in his arms, and says he:

"'Whose child is this?' And says I, 'He is General Lyon's grand-nephew, sir, if you please;' for I was sure all the time he knowed well enough it was his own.

"'I didn't ask you whose nephew he is; I asked you whose child he is.'

"'The same child whose hair you cut, sir, please,' I answered.

"'Bosh, girl, you trifle with me! Whose son is he?"

"'Please, sir, I thought you knew. He is Mrs. Alexander Lyon's *own* son, and Mr. and Mrs. Hammond's and General Lyon's god-son.'

"'Humph! what's his name?' says he.

"'Master Leonard Lyon, sir,' says I.

"'Then as I am Lord Killcrichtoun, he is the Master of Killcrichtoun!"

"'Lords and Masters, sir! you don't say so?' says I.

"And he frowned at me, black as thunder; but little Lenny began to prattle to him, and he smiled and told me to follow him. And he took us to a fine silversmith's shop in the Strand, and bought him this whistle. And then he told me to take the boy home to his mother, as it was growing too warm to keep him out in the sun."

While Pina spoke, Drusilla's tears fell fast; but she wiped them away and inquired:

"You know, Pina, when we first came here, he was lodging in this house. But I have not seen him lately. Do you know whether he is still here?"

"No, ma'am, he isn't. I asked that very question of the waiter; and he told me 'my lord' had gone and taken apartments at 'Mivart's.'"

"We drove him away, I suppose," muttered Drusilla to herself.

"Ma'am, I don't think Mrs. Hammond or Mr. Dick, or the General knows of Mr. Alick being about. If they ask me who gave Master Lenny the whistle, am I to tell?"

"Certainly, Pina."

Drusilla was interrupted by a rap at the door. The voice of Anna without called:

"Grandpa and Dick have returned, and the carriage is waiting, Drusa. Are you ready?"

"Quite ready, dear," answered Drusilla, hastily tying on her bonnet, and then going out and joining Anna.

They went to the drawing-room, Drusilla leading Lenny who was shrilly blowing upon his whistle.

"*Miserabile!* Young gentleman, that will not do. The other guests will lay complaints and the proprietor will give us warning," exclaimed General Lyon.

"Who gave Lenny that?" inquired Dick.

"Man, man in tware give Lenny dat," said the imp, taking the instrument of torture from his lips to reply, and then it putting back and puffing out his cheeks to blow an ear-piercing blast.

"Christopher Columbus! that will never do. 'Man in the square.' What man gave the child such a nuisance as that? Was it Spencer, or any of our people?" demanded the General.

"It was his father," calmly replied Drusilla.

A sort of panic fell upon the party. The short spell of silence was broken by General Lyon.

"Humph! humph! humph! humph! so *he's* turned up again, has he? Where did he see the boy, my dear?"

"Uncle," said Drusilla, "he was lodging at this house, when we first came. He left, I think, the same evening. But he knew that we also were lodging here; for while we were driving out to leave our cards he came in and cut off a lock of little Lenny's hair, and took it away with him."

"When was this?"

"The first day we went driving, uncle; the day before the Derby."

"Humph! humph! humph! And he left the same evening? and he has not been here since?"

"I believe so, uncle."

"Humph, humph; it is clear that the sight of us sent him away. I don't wonder at that. I only wonder it did not blast him."

"Oh, uncle, uncle!" pleaded Drusilla.

"My dear, your love may in time—or in eternity—redeem the fellow, for ought I know. But it has not *yet* changed him into an angel of light or even into a decently behaved devil, for a very devil with any decency left in him would have come round long before this. Well, well, there, I see how much I distress you. I will say no more, my dear; I will say no more."

Drusilla bowed in silence and turned away. Her heart was too full for utterance. Her voice was choked with emotion. She felt all the more deeply hurt by her uncle's severe strictures upon her Alick, because she knew them to be the expression of his real and but too well-founded opinion. And neither could she resent them, coming from him. She owed him too vast a debt of gratitude. He had saved her life and her child's life in their utmost extremity. And besides, he was Alick's uncle, and the head of his family; he had himself, in the person of his beloved granddaughter, been deeply wronged by his nephew and so had the right to sit in judgment on him.

Thus because she heard this blame cast upon her still beloved Alick without the moral power of resenting it, she suffered in silence.

Not long, however. The cloud soon lifted itself and rolled away. Little Lenny came to her with his whistle.

"Put dit 'way. Lenny tired. Lenny daw ate," he said, pushing the toy up into her lap.

"Put it away, mamma. Lenny is tired, and Lenny's jaws ache and no wonder," said Anna, smiling. "We are all glad that Master Lenny's jaws can ache with all his tooting, as well as our ears."

"'Top naddin'," answered Lenny.

"'Stop nagging'? Where did he pick up that phrase, eh, Master Lenny? You don't hear it from any of us."

"Come, my dears, if we are to see the Tower before dinner, we had better start at once. Is Lenny to go with us, Drusa?"

"Yes, sir, if you please."

"You know that I always like to have the little fellow."

"But I shall stipulate that the whistle be left behind. We shall find instruments of torture enough in the Tower; though I don't believe the utmost ingenuity of cruelty ever thought of a child's whistle wherewith to torment a victim. That was left for Mr. Alick."

"Come, come, Anna, I will not have another word said against Alick, since it grieves our darling here. But I would like to know what keeps him hanging about here so long. He has been here now nearly two years."

"Uncle," said Drusilla, who now thought that she might as well tell all her news at once—news which indeed she had intended to tell, when the subject of Alick's presence was first introduced, but which was then arrested on her lips by the indignant animadversions of General Lyon—"Uncle do you remember reading last winter in the London Times of a young American gentleman who claimed, through his mother, the Barony of Killcrichtoun?"

"I—think I do remember some such asinine proceeding on the part of a young countryman of ours."

"He was your nephew, uncle, and he has made good the claim. He is now Lord Killcrichtoun. That is the reason why he stays in England, I suppose."

"Whe—ew!" whistled the old gentleman, slowly, adding *sotto voce*, so as not to be heard by Drusilla:

"I knew he was a scamp; but never suspected him of being an ass."

But Dick had handed Drusilla, Lenny and Anna into the carriage, and was waiting to perform the same service for his uncle, who now entered and took his seat. The drive from Charing Cross to the Tower was comparatively short, but very interesting, taking our travelers through the most ancient and historical portions of Old London.

Drawing near the grim, old fortress of the kings of England, they saw rising above the thickly-crowded buildings of the city and the turbid waters of the Thames, the central keep, or citadel, known as the White Tower, and surrounded by its double line of fortified walls and by its dry moat.

Our party alighted from their carriage at the great gate, flanked by embattled turrets at the south-western angle of the walls.

Having paid their sixpence each as entrance fee, they passed over the stone bridge across the moat and found themselves within the outer ward, between the two lines of wall.

Here, overpowered by the spirit of the past, they looked around them, feeling something of the awe that children feel in a churchyard in the dusk of evening. The spirit of the past was indeed before them—and not only in the hoary walls of the middle ages, but in the living creatures of the day; for the warders of the Tower, the Extraordinary Yeomen of the Royal Guard, commonly called the "Beef Eaters," were dressed in the costume of the time of Henry the Eighth.

One of these stepped up to General Lyon, and saluting respectfully, tendered his service as guide.

"And there are the buildings and there the costumes, this the ground and that the sky that met the eyes of beautiful Anne Boleyn as she first came to this place a bride and a queen, and last as a victim and a convict," murmured Drusilla, dreamily and half unconsciously.

"Queen Anne entered by that postern at the water side, when she came here in state before her coronation; but the last time she was here she was brought in by the Traitors' Gate, a few days before her execution," said the literal warder, speaking just as if he had been an eye-witness to both proceedings.

Drusilla stared at him, and thought he really might

have been an actor in those long past tragedies; in his costume of that day he looked like a ghost of the past.

"Where was Lady Jane Grey brought in when she was brought here a prisoner!"

"Through the Traitors' Gate."

"Ah, it seems that all who offended majesty in those palmy days, however innocent they might have been, were traitors. Where is that Traitors' Gate?"

"Some distance down the southern side, my lady. We will come around to it presently, when I will show it to you."

They were now making the circuit of the Outer Ward, passing up the west side.

"There, sir, are the old buildings once appropriated to the Mint, which is now removed to a handsome edifice on Tower Hill, which I will show you," said the guide, turning to General Lyon.

And the General and Dick gave him their attention.

But Anna and Drusilla were not interested in the mint, and remembered Tower Hill only as the scene of the execution of Lord Guilford Dudley.

Passing on, the guide pointed out many objects of interest; the two strong bastions—the Legge Mount and the Brass Mount—defending the north-western and north-eastern angles of the outer wall; the Iron Gate and Tower at the south-eastern angle; the site of the ancient Well Tower, and the remains of the Cradle Tower. Thus they came at last to St. Thomas's Tower, which guards the Traitors' Gate.

"There it is, ladies and gentlemen," said the guide.

"Oh, how many fair and stately heads have passed under that awful arch!" murmured Anna.

As for Drusilla, the time for talking of these things was passed with her. She was too deeply impressed for speech.

General Lyon and Mr. Hammond instinctively uncovered their heads in the presence of this dread monument of human suffering.

"Yes, ladies and gentlemen, here passed to their deaths the beautiful Queen Anne Boleyn, the fair Queen Katharine Howard, the lovely Lady Jane Gray, the courtly Nor-

folk, the accomplished Burleigh, the venerable Thomas More——"

"And hundreds and hundreds more—the victims of tyranny and bigotry," said General Lyon cutting short the list.

"That's so, sir," admitted the guide. "Ah, if you had lived in those days!"

"Did *you?*" inquired Anna, turning upon him.

The guide smiled.

"I almost think I did, ma'am, sometimes—what with living here, and what with going over the history so many times a day. This way, ladies and gentlemen."

And he led the way from the Traitors' Gate straight across the ward to an imposing gateway defended by the Bloody Tower, leading through the embattled wall that encloses the inner ward.

"This tower," said the guide, "is the scene of the murder of the two young princes, sons of Edward the Fourth, assassinated by order of their uncle, Richard the Third."

"Can we enter and examine it?"

"The interior is not shown. It is occupied by some of the officers of the guard as private lodgings."

"Oh, think of such an ancient and tragical place being occupied as a dwelling, where people eat, drink, sleep and live! I wonder what my spiritual condition would be if I lived in such a place?" said Anna, gazing on the gray walls as she passed them.

"This inner wall is fortified by twelve strong minor towers, all of them formerly used as prison-lodgings. I will show the most interesting of them as we go on," said the guide. "But first I will take you to the White Tower," he added, pointing to the imposing citadel that occupied the center.

"I should take that to be *the* Tower—the Tower *par-excellence.* Pray, is that the place where the old monarchs of England used to hold their court before Elizabeth's time?" inquired Anna.

"No, ma'am. The old Palace of the Tower was pulled down in the reign of James II. It occupied the south-east angle of the inner ward—there, you see, on the site of the present Ordnance office."

"What a pity a building so replete with interesting associations should have been destroyed," said Anna.

"There, ladies and gentlemen, that modern building which you see against the south wall of the White Tower, is the Horse Armory, where the equestrian statues of our kings, in their ancient armors, are arranged in state!"

"Oh, yes, we have tickets for the Horse Armory—we will see that at once, if you please!" said General Lyon.

They crossed towards the White Tower and the Horse Armory.

"You now see before you, sir, the oldest and the newest of these structures joined together. The White Tower is the most ancient as well as the most imposing of the buildings," said the guide.

"So I should judge from its great size and central position," remarked the General.

"It was erected, sir, in 1080 by William the Conqueror as a stronghold against enemies, the rebellious Saxons, who opposed his reign. It is a magnificent specimen of Norman architecture. The walls are of immense thickness and strength. I will take you through it presently; but here we are at the Horse Armory, which is the most modern of all the tower buildings, quite modern indeed, a work of to-day, comparatively speaking, having been built in 1826. Your tickets, sir, if you please."

Dick, who held the tickets, passed them over to the warder, who at once led his party to an ante-room of the Armory, where they were to wait for a new guide to take them through.

"When you return here, sir," said the guide, "I shall be happy to show you through the White Tower, and all the other towers of the inner ward."

"Thanks," said the General.

And the man touched his hat and fell back.

There were several other groups of sight-seers waiting in the ante-room for guides to conduct them.

And presently these guides appeared, bringing out parties they had been attending.

One of them beckoning our friends to follow him, led them straightways into a vast hall, some hundred feet in length by thirty in breadth, dimly lighted on each side

by stained glass windows and decorated on the walls and ceiling with the most curious and valuable military trophies and emblems.

In glass cases under these windows were exhibited such wonders of warlike workmanship as are nowhere else gathered together—helmets, gauntlets, shields, swords, spears, lances and other specimens of armor, won from many a battle-field, stormed fortress, or sacked city, of all ages of history and all countries of the world. And each curious specimen had its equally curious history or legend.

Yet our party scarcely glanced at any of these or heard a word of the explanation uttered by their guide.

For down the centre of the vast hall, drawn up as in line of battle, was a grim array of equestrian figures, clothed in complete steel, being a line of the old kings of England from the time of Edward the First to the time of James the Second, each man and horse in the armor of his day.

"This," said the guide, pausing before the first figure, that stood upon an elevated platform at the head of the line, "is Edward the First, in the same armor he is said to have worn on his invasion of Scotland. You perceive he is represented as in the act of drawing his sword. Observe, if you please, sir, this beautiful specimen of chain armor."

Thus the guide went on with his explanation of these equestrian effigies of the old kings, calling the attention of his hearers to the most remarkable features of the exhibition and gaining their interest.

Each member of this party was deeply absorbed in the subject, but none so deeply as was Drusilla. Her susceptible nature received all the influence, imbibed all the inspiration of the scene. Her vivid imagination carried her centuries back to the storied age in which all these dead and gone heroes lived and acted.

"Henry the Sixth," said the guide, pausing before the effigy of that unhappy king. "Notice, if you please, sir, this splendid specimen of scale-armor, sometimes called flexible armor."

Drusilla gazed on, drinking in every word that fell from this oracle's lips and deep in the romance of mediæ-

val history when, suddenly looking up, she uttered a half-suppressed cry.

Gone were the middle ages with their tales of chivalry and minstrelsy! Vanished king and page, and knight and squire! With her was only the present—the intensely real present! For there, not ten feet from her, stood her husband, Alexander Lyon, Lord Killcrichtoun! His back was turned towards her. He stood over one of the glass-cases before the stained-glass window, examining a curious Etruscan helmet.

At her half-uttered cry he turned around—and their eyes met—met for the first time since that cruel parting on the wedding-night!

But he recognized her with a cold, uncompromising stare. And then, seeing that the regards of her whole party were drawn upon him, he seemed resolved to face the situation. Walking deliberately towards them, he raised his hat slowly, bowed deeply, passed them, and went down to the opposite end of the armory.

"Humph, humph, humph, humph!" muttered the General to himself, "that is what I call cool impudence!"

Drusilla could not speak or move. She stood transfixed and motionless as any one of those grim effigies before them. She stood thus until General Lyon kindly broke the spell that bound her, by lightly laying his hand upon her shoulder and whispering:

"My dear, recollect yourself!"

She started, and recovered her self-possession at once, and in time to see little Lenny, whom Dick led by the hand, pulling at his protector, and pointing down the hall, and shouting:

"Man, man! div Lenny that *hoo!*" putting up his lips and describing in pantomime the whistle whose name he had forgotten.

"Little Lenny knew him again!" murmured Drusilla to herself.

All this did not quite escape the notice of the guide. He saw what passed, but apparently without understanding it; for, turning to General Lyon, he said:

"Lord Killcrichtoun, sir! His face is as well known here as any of these images. He is in almost every day."

Then, reverting to his own especial business, and pointing out another effigy, he said:

"Henry the Eighth, ladies and gentlemen. Pray observe this magnificent suit of armor, damaskeened or inlaid with pure gold. It is said to be the same he wore on that famous occasion of his meeting with Francis I. on the field of the Cloth of Gold."

"Oh, the horrid monster! I would rather look upon Lucifer's self than Henry the Eighth's effigy! Let us pass on," said Anna impatiently.

And they passed on, pausing now and then to gaze upon the armed and mounted effigy of some knight or king, famous or, perhaps, infamous in history or tradition, until they reached the last one in the line—James II.—after whose day fire-arms came in and armor went out.

And so they passed from the Horse Armory to Queen Elizabeth's Armory, occupying an apartment in the lower floor of the White Tower.

At the upper end was an equestrian effigy of the Royal Fury of Tudor, who cut off her lovers' heads as her father before her had cut off his wives'. She was dressed in the preposterous costume of her court, mounted on a carved charger, and attended by her page. She was most appropriately surrounded by curious chains and manacles, ingenious instruments of torture, and judicial implements of death.

Conspicuous among these was the thumb-screw, the rack, the headsman's axe, and the heading block upon which the old Lord Lovat and his companions had been decapitated.

Here, on the north side, was also a small, heavy door leading into a deep and narrow dungeon cut in the thickness of the wall, and having neither air nor light except that which entered by the doorway.

"In this dismal hole the accomplished Sir Walter Raleigh passed the long years of his imprisonment, and here he wrote his History of the World."

"He had leisure enough for such a stupendous work; but I don't see where he got space or light from, or how he could possibly have lived in such a dark, damp den," said Dick.

"Oh, you see, sir, it is to be supposed that he was only

locked in there at night, and had the freedom of the hall during the day."

They next ascended the stairs to the second floor, and visited the ancient Council Chamber, where the old Kings held their Court at the Tower. This was the place of Anne Boleyn's trial. Then on the same floor was St. John's Chapel, the most perfect specimen of Norman architecture in the country.

All these things Drusilla saw as in a dream. She was thinking only of her husband and the cold stare with which he had met her eyes.

The guide led them from the White Tower to the green before the prison chapel—St. Peter's.

"Stop here a moment, if you please, ladies and gentlemen," he said.

They all paused, thinking from that point he was going to indicate some view or effect. But it was not so.

"Do you know where you stand, ladies? No? Well, you stand upon the exact spot where the head of Anne Boleyn fell under the executioner's stroke."

Anna impulsively sprang away. Dick and the General looked interested. But Drusilla heard him with something like indifference. Queen Anne's sufferings were so long past and now so vague; Drusilla's own were so present and so real. She was scarcely conscious of the remainder of her tour through the Tower buildings.

The guide led the party into St. Peter's chapel; told them it had been built in the reign of Edward I., 1282, and showed them the flag stones in front of the altar beneath which repose the remains of the sainted Lady Jane Grey, the venerable Thomas Cromwell, the good and great Somerset, the accomplished Surrey, the brilliant Essex, and many other less exalted but no less honorable martyrs to truth and patriotism, victims to bigotry and tyranny.

Leaving St. Peter's Chapel, our friends made the circuit of the twelve minor towers of the inner ward. These in the "good old times" were all used as prisons, lodgings for those who had had the misfortune to become obnoxious to despotism or fanaticism.

Among these the richest in historic associations is the Beauchamp Tower, popularly called the Beechum Tower,

whose walls are cut all over with the autographs or other inscriptions of the illustrious dead, who in its gloomy dungeons pined away the last days of their violently ended lives.

The Brick Tower was pointed out as having been the prison of Lady Jane Gray ; the Devereux Tower as that of the Earl of Essex ; the Bell Tower as once the prison of the Princess Elizabeth when she was confined by the jealousy of her sister, Queen Mary ; the Bowyer Tower as the place in which the Duke of Clarence was drowned in the butt of malmsey wine.

But that which filled the beholders with a deeper gloom than all the others was the Flint Tower, called for the superlative horror of its dungeons the Little Hell.

That was the last abyss of the inferno that our sight-seers looked into. The women, at least, could bear no more.

"Come," said Anna, shuddering. "It is not evening, so we have not 'supped,' but we have dined 'full of horrors.' Let us leave the Tower with its gloomy dungeons and ghastly memories, and the Yeomen of the Guard in their devil's mourning of black and red, for Bloody Henry Tudor, I suppose ; let us get out into the pure open air, and back to the wholesome nineteenth century."

General Lyon and Dick liberally remunerated the civil and attentive warders, and the whole party passed out of the Tower walls, entered their carriage, and returned to their hotel, where awaited them—a very great surprise.

CHAPTER XVIII.

WAITING AND HOPING.

Silence, silence, still, unstirred—
Long, unbroken, unexplained ;
Not one word, one little word
Even to show him touched or pained.
Silence, silence, all unbroken—
Not a sound, a word, or token—OWEN MEREDITH.

STILL overshadowed with the gloom of their visit to the Tower, our party entered their private parlor at their hotel.

They found their favorite sofa occupied by a group of visitors.

But before General Lyon had time to recognize or welcome them, a hearty hand was clapped upon his shoulder, and a cheery voice shouted in his ear:

"So here you are at last! We have been waiting for you these two hours."

"Colonel Seymour!" exclaimed General Lyon, in unfeigned surprise and delight.

"Yes, and Mrs. Seymour and Miss Seymour."

"Old friends, I am glad to see you."

"So am I to see you."

And there was a general and hearty shaking of hands.

"Now be seated again all of you. When did you arrive?" inquired the General.

"Bless you! just now, I may say. Landed at Liverpool last night, slept at the Adelphi, took the train this morning and reached London this noon."

"And where are you stopping?"

"At Mivart's for the present. And before we got settled there, I took a Hansom cab and drove off to the American Embassy to inquire where you hung out. I saw a young fellow of the name of Troubador——"

"Tredegar," amended Dick.

"Ah yes, thank you—so it was Tredegar. Well, I saw a young fellow of the name of Tredegar, who told me where to find you; and so I drove back to Mivart's as fast as ever I could—and how those Hansom cabs can fly over the ground!—and I changed my Hansom for a four wheeler, and just giving Nan time to put on her finery, I took her and her mother in and drove here!" exclaimed the visitor, eagerly talking himself out of breath, and briskly wiping his face with his pocket-handkerchief.

"And we are all so charmed to see you. We never had a more complete surprise, or a more delightful one," said Anna.

And all her party cordially assented to her words.

"I hope you did not have to wait for us long," said Dick, anxiously.

"Two mortal hours, I tell you, at the risk of being turned out every minute, too."

"How was that?" quickly inquired the General.

"Why, you see, first of all, that fellow in the white neckcloth and napkin told me somewhat shortly that neither General Lyon nor any of his party were at home."

"'I know that, because they are here,' I answered.

"'But they are not in, sir,' he replied.

"'Then we will wait till they are,' I rejoined.

"'They'll not be here, till five o'clock,' he added.

"'All right. We will sit down and make ourselves comfortable until that hour,' I remarked.

"'That's the General's dinner hour,' growled the fellow.

"'Which is extremely lucky, as we can dine with him,' concluded I.

"The fellow looked as if he suspected me of being the confidence man, and meditated calling in the police. However he contented himself with beckoning to an under waiter, jerking his thumb over his shoulder in my direction, and muttering something very like an order to the other one not to lose sight of me. And so he or the other fellow kept an eye on me all the while."

"The insolent scoundrel!" exclaimed General Lyon, indignantly.

"Not at all. He was an honest fellow—had your interest at heart and looked after it. How did he know but I might have walked off with the piano?" answered the visitor, patting his host on the shoulder to soothe down his anger, and adding, "I know I, for one, looked like a suspicious party, in my weather-beaten sea-suit. And just see what an old-fashioned bonnet my wife wears; and as for Nanny, I have a painful impression that she is overdressed," he sighed, glancing from the rich, light-blue taffeta gown, and white silk mantle and bonnet of Miss Seymour's costume to the plain grays that formed the street dress of the other ladies.

"Miss Nanny is charming in any style," said the General, gallantly, bowing to the mortified girl.

"However," continued Colonel Seymour, "I was anxious to see you all, so I waited. I suppose if we had been fashionable folks we should have left our cards and gone away; but being plain people, we preferred to wait for your return. So here we are, and here you are! We expected to see you, but you didn't expect to see us, did you now?"

"No; but we are not the less overjoyed on that account. And of course you must stay and dine with us."

"Of course. I told the waiter so," laughed the colonel.

"Now, dear Mrs. Seymour and darling Nanny, you must both come up with Drusilla and myself to our rooms to take off your bonnets," said Anna, rising and conducting her visitors from the room.

At a sign from the General, Dick went down-stairs to order some necessary additions to their dinner, in honor of their guests.

"Now, old friend, tell me what put it into your head to cross the ocean and give me this great pleasure?" inquired General Lyon, when he found himself alone with his neighbor.

"Example," answered Colonel Seymour;—"nothing but example. You and your family left the neighborhood to go to Europe. And I and mine were very lonesome, I can tell you, after you were all gone. So one day I up and said to my wife:

"'Polly, if we are ever to see the Old World, we had as well see it now as at another time. We are not growing younger, Polly. Indeed I sometimes fancy we are growing older.'

"'Why, la, Benny,' she said, 'can't you live and die like your fathers without leaving your own country?'

"So I answered right up and down:

"'No, Polly, I cannot. And as we *must* go to Europe some time, to show it to our girl, if for no other reason, we can't choose a better time than this when our old neighbors are over there. We'll go and join them and have a good time.'

"Well, upon the whole, Polly didn't dislike the idea of the trip; and as for Nancy, she was all for it. So we up and came."

"You must have decided and acted with great promptitude to be over here so soon after us."

"Didn't we, though! We set the house in order the next day, which was Tuesday; packed up Wednesday, went to New York Thursday, and sailed from Liverpool on Saturday."

"What! and had not previously engaged berths in your steamer?"

"No; didn't know that was necessary until I went into the agent's office. And then it was by a stroke of luck we got the rooms. A family who were going out by that steamer that day were unavoidably delayed, and had to give up their berths. And I engaged them."

"Well, certainly, you were more lucky than you knew."

"Yes, 'a fool for luck,' it is said."

"Well, now, neighbor, shall we follow the example of the ladies and go to my dressing-room to refresh our toilets? As for myself, I have been poking into the vaults and dungeons of the Tower, and I feel as if I were covered with the dust of ages!"

"Yes, and I am just as unbearable with railway smoke and cinders."

"Come, then," said the General, rising and conducting his visitor to his own apartment.

Half an hour afterwards, all the friends assembled in the parlor, where the table was laid for dinner.

At half-past five it was served. It consisted of a boiled turbot with shrimp sauce; green-turtle soup; roasted young ducks and green peas; pigeon-pasty; cauliflowers, asparagus, sea-kail and, in short, the choice vegetables of the month; and, for dessert, delicate whipped creams, jellies, and ices, and candied fruits, and nuts; and port, and sherry, and champagne, and moselle wines.

The "fellow in the neckcloth and napkin," as the colonel described the waiter, seeing how well these visitors were received by General Lyon and family, tried to make up for his mistakes of the morning by the most obsequious attentions, all of which the good-natured Seymour received in excellent part.

Old Seymour was blessed with a keen appetite and a strong digestion. He had always enjoyed his homely farm dinners of boiled beef, or bacon and greens, washed down with native whiskey-toddy, and now he much more keenly enjoyed the rare delicacies set before him.

After coffee was served they arose from the table, and the service was removed.

"I suppose, my dear, there is no such thing as a treat in the form of your sweet music to be hoped for this evening?" sighed the colonel, as he took his seat in a resting chair.

"Why not, Colonel Seymour?" smiled Drusilla.

"Oh, to be sure, I see a piano in the room; but of course it is a hotel piano, which you would no more care to touch than I would to hear!"

"Suppose you let me try this 'hotel piano.' Let us not yield to a prejudice, but give the abused thing a fair trial," said Drusilla, smiling as she sat down to one of the finest instruments of the most celebrated manufacturer in London.

She executed in her best style some of Colonel Seymour's favorite pieces. And the old colonel, as usual, listened, entranced,

"Why, that is one of the best toned pianos I ever heard in my life—quite as good as your own fine instrument at home!" exclaimed the old man in surprise. "But what amazes me is that it should be in such good tone. I never could abide either school pianos or hotel pianos in my life before."

"This is neither," answered Drusilla, laughing. "We hired this from a celebrated music-bazar."

"Ah, that accounts for it!" said the colonel. "Now, my dear, begin again! Consider, I haven't heard the sound of your sweet voice in song for a month before to-night!"

"And that is just the reason why he crossed the ocean, Drusilla, my dear, and nothing else in life!" said Mrs. Seymour. "He may talk about showing Nanny the old world and improving her mind and all that, but it's no such thing! It was the love of your music that lured him all the way from America, like the lute of What's-his-name did the spirits out of What-do-you-call it!"

Drusilla smiled on the old lady and recommenced her pleasant task, and played and sang for the old gentleman during the remainder of the evening.

At eleven o'clock the visitors arose to take their leave, but of course did not do it immediately,—they stood and talked for half an hour longer. And, in that standing conference, it was arranged that General Lyon should see about getting suitable apartments at the Morley House for the Seymours; and, if none should now be vacant, that he should bespeak in advance the first that should be disengaged.

It was farther agreed that the two parties of friends should join company in all sight-seeing excursions, and that they should always lunch together.

And here a friendly quarrel, each old gentleman insisting upon being the permanent host of the lunch table. Finally the dispute ended in an amicable arrangement that General Lyon and Colonel Seymour should each be the host on alternate days.

Then indeed the Seymours took leave and departed.

And the Lyons went to rest.

Drusilla entered her own bed-chamber. Little Lenny was asleep in his crib. Pina was nodding in her seat.

Drusilla had neither the will nor the power to sleep. She threw herself in her resting-chair and gave her mind up to thought. She was glad to be alone. The day had been a very harassing one—at once exciting and depressing in its events and experiences. Yet all that had occurred to her sank into utter insignificance compared with the single incident of one instant—the cold stare with which her husband had met her eyes. More than all his double dealing with her; more than his long neglect of her at Cedarwood; more than his cruel repudiation of her on her wedding night; more than his two years of scornful abandonment—did this cold, hard, strange stare chill her love and darken her faith and depress her hopes. Drusilla's sad reverie was interrupted by a gentle rap at her door. It had been probably repeated more than once before it broke into her abstraction. Now thinking it was the chamber-maid coming on some errand connected with fresh water or clean towels, she was about to bid the rapper come in; but quickly reflecting that the hour was too late to expect a visit from the damsel in question, and feeling startled at the thought of an unknown visitor at midnight, she cautiously inquired:

"Who is there?"

"It is I, Drusa, dear. I know you are still up, for I see the light shining through your key-hole, and you never sleep with a light burning," said the voice of Mrs. Hammond.

"Come in, dear Anna," said Drusilla, rising and opening the door.

"Now, if you really prefer to be alone, tell me so, my

dear, and I will not take it amiss, but leave you at once," said Anna, hesitating, before she took the easy-chair offered her by Drusilla.

"No; how could you think so? How could you think I could prefer my own company to yours? I know you came to cheer me up, and I feel how kind you are. Sit down, dear Anna."

"Well, Drusa, you have seen we have not had one moment to ourselves to-day; and we may not have to-morrow. I knew—I felt instinctively that you would be too much excited to sleep to-night, so I came to you, my dear—partly, as you say, to cheer you up, but partly, also, to talk of something that happened to-day."

"Yes—thank you, dear Anna."

"You have confidence enough in me, I hope, Drusilla, to feel that you and I can talk upon some ticklish subjects without offence, since I speak only in your interest."

"Yes, Anna."

"Well, then, we met Alick in the Tower. That seems certain. But *did* I hear and see right, and *did* the guide point out our Alick and call him Lord Kilcrackam?"

"Lord Killcrichtoun. Yes, Anna."

"And furthermore, *did* I dream it, or did I hear something said between you and grandpa—something that did not reach my ears quite distinctly, because I was not very near you at the time, and you spoke quite low, as you always do—something in short, to the effect that our Alick is the same young American gentleman who claimed a certain Scotch barony in right of his mother?"

"Yes, it was Alick who claimed, and made good his claim to the barony of Killcrichtoun. I should have thought Dick, as much as he is about town, would have found it out before this."

"Oh dear, no, he has not. It would have been the merest chance if he had, in a town where there is so much more—so very much more—to be talked about than a young man's succession to a petty lordship. By the way, how did *you* know it, Drusilla?"

"The first day of our being here I was standing at the front window and saw him leave the house and walk across the square. I was very much startled, and called the waiter, and, pointing to Alick, inquired if that gentle-

man were stopping here. The man told me that he was here for the present, but would leave in the evening, and that he was Lord Killcrichtoun. And then there flashed upon me all at once the idea that he was the very same young American gentleman who had claimed the title."

"And you never told us about it," said Anna, in surprise.

"I—shrank from the subject; and, besides, I did not think you would care to hear. You remember little Lenny's losing a lock of hair?"

"Certainly; and it was cut off by his father, I suppose."

"Yes, in the absence of Pina, and while Lenny was in the temporary charge of the chambermaid."

"And you never mentioned it to us."

"Dear Anna, you know I never bring up Alick's name unnecessarily."

"Well, but I must tell Dick all about it if you have no objection."

"None in the world. I wish him to know it."

"But I am astonished at Alexander, merging the honest manliness of an American citizen in the empty title of a Scotch barony! However, it is all of a piece with his late mad proceedings. Now, there, I see from your reproving countenance that I must utter no more blasphemies against your idol; but now if the divine Alexander is Lord Killcrichtoun, what are *you*, my dear?"

Drusilla looked up with a startled expression, then reflected a few moments, and finally answered:

"I am his wife: beyond that I have never thought."

"You are Lady Killcrichtoun; and now here is the difficulty: Your cards bear the name Mrs. Alexander Lyon. Everywhere my grandfather has introduced you as such; all the invitations sent you are addressed to you by that name: and more, our lady ambassadress expects to present you at her Majesty's next drawing-room as Mrs. Alexander Lyon. Now what's to be done about that?"

Drusilla did not answer, but she reflected—so long that Anna broke in upon her meditation with the question:

"You have a right to share your husband's title—a

right of which he cannot deprive you, for it is legally your own. Shall we not then introduce you as Lady Killcrichtoun?"

"No," answered Drusilla, gravely. "The name I now bear is also legally my own, having been given me by my husband in our marriage. I will retain it. I will never attempt to share his new rank until he himself shall give me leave to do so. If, without his sanction, I were to take my part in his title, I should seem to be pursuing him, which I will never consent to do, dear Anna."

"But then, my dear, do you consider that if you refuse to do this, you will enter society in some degree under false colors."

"Dear Anna, there is no necessity for my entering society *at all*. I would rather live in seclusion as Drusilla Lyon than go into the world as Lady Killcrichtoun, and of course I *can* live so."

"And if you *do* live so, you will never see Alick; but if you go out, you will meet him every day; for of course he is the gayest man about town here, as he used to be at home. And you may depend he will be received everywhere; for in this country a title is a title, and though the barony of Killcrichtoun may not be worth five hundred a year, Alick has an enormous outside fortune, which fact cannot be hid under a bushel. And going about as he does, *alone*, he will be thought a single man, and, under all the supposed circumstances, a very eligible match. Now, Drusa, if I were you, I would put a stop to all that by going constantly into society, and going too as Lady Killcrichtoun."

"No," repeated Drusilla, "I will never share his title until he authorizes me to do so. And as to going out under my present name, I will be guided by General Lyon. As he is responsible for me, he must be the final judge in this matter."

"So this is your decision?"

"Yes, dear Anna."

They might have talked longer, but Pina, who had been fast asleep in her chair all this time, now tumbled off it and fell upon the floor with a noise that terrified both the friends and started them upon their feet.

"It is only that girl—how she frightened me! I thought

it was some one breaking into the room!" exclaimed Anna, trembling as Pina picked herself up and stood staring in dismay.

"Poor girl! how thoughtless of me to have forgotten her! Go to bed, Pina, it is half-past twelve," said Drusilla, kindly.

And the maid, still more than half asleep, tumbled off to her cot in a closet adjoining her mistress's chamber.

Anna also arose, and, bidding Drusilla good-night, passed to her own room.

Drusilla went to bed, but not to sleep. She lay revolving the problem that Anna had left her to solve. Should she enter London society *at all* under her present circumstances?

As yet, neither her party nor herself had gone to any sort of private entertainment. They had left cards on the people to whom the General had letters of introduction. And they had received calls from many of them. Also they had many notes of invitation to dinners, balls, concerts, and fêtes of every description; but, as yet, none of these notes had fallen due. So Drusilla stood uncommitted to the world by either name or title.

Now the question with her was this,—Should she go to parties at all?

If she should, she was resolved it should be only under her simple name. But then, if being the wife of Lord Killcrichtoun, she should go only as Mrs. Lyon, would she not be, as Anna said, appearing under false colors?

Would it not be better, all things considered, that she should live secluded?

Ah, but then Alexander was in the world, and the temptation to go where she might enjoy the happiness of seeing him daily, even though he should never speak to her, was irresistible! She could not deny herself that delight.

Then, finally, she determined to speak to her old friend, General Lyon, on the subject; and with her mind more at ease, she fell asleep.

CHAPTER XIX.

MEETING EVERY DAY.

We that were friends, yet are not now,
We that must daily meet,
With ready words and courteous bow,
Acquaintance of the street,
We must not scorn the holy past,
We must remember still
To honor feelings that outlast
The reason and the will.—MILNES.

NEXT morning, over an early breakfast, our party discussed, with their tea, toast, muffins, and fried soles, the programme of the week.

How crowded their life in London was getting to be. Every day, every hour, nay, every moment, we might say, pre-engaged!

We go to Westminster Abbey first. The Seymours are to go with us, and are to join us here at ten o'clock. It is after nine now," said the General, as he chipped his egg.

"They will not be behind time, you may depend on it," laughed Dick. "We shall be able to get off by ten o'clock, and get into the Abbey by a quarter past. It will take us at least three hours to do Westminster, which will bring one o'clock or a little later, when we can get lunch at Simmon's, in Threadneedle Street,—an old-established house, celebrated for its green turtle and its punch this century past. After which we will still have time to see St. Paul's, and to get home in season for our five o'clock dinner."

"And remember, Dick, that we must not be later, for we have a box this evening at Drury Lane, to see the Keans."

"All right, Anna! we are not likely to forget that."

"And let us see! what is the programme for to-morrow?" inquired the General.

"I do not think that has been arranged yet," said Drusilla.

"Then let it be the British Museum and the Royal Academy."

"Oh, no, grandpa! We must go to Windsor to-morrow; and I'll tell you why. It will take a whole day and night to go to Windsor, see it all, and return. And to-morrow is the only whole day we have at our disposal. For on Thursday we are engaged to dinner at Lord Esteppe's, and to a concert at Mrs. Marcourt's. On Friday we are to breakfast with the Warrens and to go to a ball at our Minister's; and on Saturday we are promised to the Whartons for their fête at Richmond. Now out of either of these days we might take a few hours to see any London sights; but for Windsor we must have an unbroken day, and to-morrow is the only one of this week, or of next week either for that matter, left at our disposal."

"That is very true, my dear. Bless my soul, how we are crowded with engagements! It is very flattering, of course, and very pleasant, I suppose; but—it is just a little harassing also. Dick, have you ordered a barouche?"

"No, sir; but I have finished breakfast, and if you will excuse me I will go and do so now; or, rather, I mean I will walk around to the livery stable and choose a good one myself," answered Mr. Hammond, rising from the table and leaving the room.

With an excuse for her absence, Anna followed him.

As the General was still toying with his breakfast, Drusilla lingered to keep him company.

The waiter had retired and the two were alone, a circumstance so unusual, and so unlikely to happen again, that Drusilla thought this to be her best opportunity for consulting him upon the difficulty that now perplexed her mind.

So while the old gentleman sat trifling with a delicate section of his fried sole, Drusilla abruptly entered upon the subject:

"Uncle, we are all invited to a great many places; and we have accepted all the invitations. But before I go to any party I would like to have a talk with you."

"Well, my dear, talk away! what is it about?" inquired the old man, somewhat surprised by the gravity of her manner.

"Uncle, is it quite right that I, a forsaken wife, should go so much into the world?"

"My child, I thought that question had been asked and answered two years ago at Old Lyon Hall."

"So it was, you dear uncle, answered in a way to give me pleasure as well as peace. But the circumstances are different now from what they were then. Then we were in your own familiar neighborhood, among your own old country friends and neighbors, who loved and honored you so much that they would have received with gladness and courtesy any one whom you might choose to present as a member of your family. But here, dear uncle, it is different; we are in a foreign city and among strangers."

"Yes, my child, but among strangers who are hospitable and courteous; and to whom I have brought such letters of introduction as must secure a hearty welcome both to myself and every member of my family. Have no fears or doubts, little Drusa. You who are blameless must not be 'sent to Coventry,' as if you were faulty."

Drusilla sighed and continued:

"Uncle, there is another circumstance that complicates the case very much."

"Well, my dear, and what is it?"

"At home I was known as Mrs. Lyon, which was my true name; but here, since Alick has made good his claim to the Scotch barony, I have another name and title," said Drusilla, so solemnly that the General laid down his fork and laughed heartily as he answered:

"And so, my dear, you want us to introduce you as Lady Killcrichtoun!"

"Oh, no, *no*, NO!" exclaimed Drusilla, earnestly, "not so! I do not want that! I would not consent to it! Indeed I would not! Anna can tell you that I said so last night!"

"And you are right, my child, entirely right; and I commend your good sense in making such a resolution. But where then is your difficulty, my dear?"

"Why, just in this—my husband being now Lord Killcrichtoun, would I not, by entering society as Mrs. Lyon, be appearing under false colors; and rather than do that had I not better eschew society altogether?"

"No, my dear; a thousand noes to both your questions! You are known to yourself and to your nearest relations and best friends, and to myself who introduce and endorse you, as Mrs. Lyon. And by that name I shall continue to call you and to present you. Who knows you to be Lady Killcrichtoun? or even Alick to be Lord Killcrichtoun? Do you know it? Do I? *Does he himself?* He calls himself so; but that don't prove it *is* so. The newspapers affirm it; but that don't prove it. The world accepts him as such; but that don't prove either—at least to us who have always known him only as Mr. Lyon, and haven't examined the evidences that he is anybody else. Similarly we have known you only as Mrs. Lyon, and shall take you with us everywhere and introduce you as such; at least until Alick himself assures to you your other title."

"Thank you, dear uncle. Again your decision has given me pleasure as well as peace. I *did* wish to go everywhere with you and Anna; but I was resolved to go only as Mrs. Lyon, though I was afraid that by doing so I should appear under false colors. But your clear and wise exposition has set all my anxieties at rest. I am glad you still wish me to go into company," said Drusilla, earnestly.

"My dear, I have a motive for wishing you to go. Drusilla, my child, you and I may surely confide in each other?"

"As the dearest father and child, dear uncle, yes."

"Then, Drusa, my darling, in these two years that you have been with us, I have studied you to some purpose. I see you very cheerful, my child, but I know that you are not quite happy. Something is wanting, and of course I see what it is;—it is Alexander, since you still love him with unchanging constancy."

"Oh, yes, yes, yes," breathed Drusilla, in a very low tone.

"I know you do. Well, as you love Alick, so he needs you, whether he knows it or not. You are the angel of his life, and the only power under Heaven that can save him. I know Alexander well. I have known him from his infancy, and of course I know all the strong and all the weak points in his character."

Drusilla raised her eyes to the old man's face with a deprecating and pleading expression.

"Fear nothing, my child; I am not going to abuse him, at least not to you; in saying that he has his weak points, I say no more of him than I might say of myself or any other man. But it is through their weakness men are often saved as well as through their strength. Listen to me, my dear Drusilla."

"I am listening, sir."

"Well, then, Alick's chief weakness is that he can only admire through the eyes of the world, for which he has always had the greatest veneration."

"Do you think so, sir? Ah, surely he was not considering the world's opinion when he married me, his housekeeper's daughter," pleaded Drusilla.

"No; passion, if he is capable of feeling at all, makes even a worldly man forget the world sometimes. And, pardon me, my dear Drusilla, if I say that he married you for your personal attractions, for your perfect beauty and brilliant genius—of that in your nature which is fairer than beauty and brighter than genius, and better and lovelier than both, he knew nothing at all; he has yet to learn of them."

Drusilla, blushing deeply under this praise, which was but just tribute, kept her eyes fixed upon the floor. General Lyon continued:

"Yes, my dear, he is worldly—he worships the world and sees through the eyes of the world. What was it that blinded him to your sweet domestic virtues and tempted him from your side? It was the brilliant social success of Anna—of Anna, for whom he cared not a cent, and whom he had really jilted for your sake; but with whom he actually fancied himself in love as soon as he found her out to be belle of the season, the queen of fashion, and all that ephemeral rubbish."

Drusilla sighed, but made no answer.

"He has got over all that nonsense, believe me. He regards Anna now, probably, very much as he did when he jilted her for you and before her splendid season in Washington had so dazzled and maddened him. He has gotten over *that* nonsense; but not over the worldliness that led him into it; for that is a part of his nature.

And now, Drusa, I will tell you why I wish to introduce you into the most fashionable society here."

Drusilla looked up with eager attention.

"*Because* in society here you are sure to eclipse Anna and every other beauty of her type."

"Oh, uncle!"

"My dear, I am speaking fact, not flattery. Anna is beautiful; we will grant that; but she is of that large, fair style, so rare in our country that it made her a belle there, but which is too common here to make her more than one of the pretty women of the season. On the contrary, *your* style, Drusilla, more common in America, is extremely rare here. You will be new. You will make what women call a 'sensation.' Alick will see it, and he will discover his folly, if he never finds out his sin in having left you. There, Drusilla! there is the old man's policy, worthy of a manœuvering chaperon, is it not?"

Drusilla knew not what to reply. For her own part she didn't like anything that savored of "policy." She longed—oh, how intensely!—for a reconciliation with her husband; it was her one thought by day, her one dream by night, her one aspiration in life! but she did not want it brought about by any sort of manœuvering. Perhaps the General read her thoughts, for he said earnestly:

"I see you do not quite approve my plan, dear child. You would rather Alick's own better nature should bring him back to his wife and babe; but ah, my dear, who can appeal to that better nature so successfully as yourself? and how can you ever appeal to it unless you have him to yourself? And how can you have him, unless you attract him in the way I suggest. Let him see you appreciated by others, that he may learn to appreciate you himself. Let him seek you because others admire you; and then when you have him again, you may trust your own love to win his heart forever!—But here is Dick, and, bless me, yes; here are all the Seymours, at his heels!"

Colonel Seymour and his family entered, marshalled in by Dick. And there were cordial morning salutations and hand-shakings.

The carriages were waiting. Drusilla ran off to call Anna and to put on her own bonnet.

And in a few minutes the whole party started on their sight-seeing excursion.

The programme of the day was carried out. They went just to Westminster Abbey and saw there the wonders and beauties of several successive orders of architecture. They saw the most ancient chapel of Edward the Confessor, containing the tomb of that Royal Saint, and the old coronation chair and other memorials of the Saxon kings, and the remains of many of their Norman successors.

They saw the splendid chapel of Henry the Seventh, with the beautiful tomb of that fierce paladin, conqueror of Richard Third, and founder of the sanguinary Tudor dynasty; and of his meek consort, Elizabeth of York, surnamed the Good. And there also they saw, oh strange juxta position! the tombs of that beautiful Mary Stuart, and of her rival and destroyer, the ruthless Elizabeth Tudor; and the tombs of many other royal and noble celebrities besides.

And they examined many other chapels, filled with the monuments and memorials of kings and queens, knights and ladies, heroes and martyrs, poets and philosophers, who had adorned the history of the country and of the world, from the foundation of the Abbey to the present time.

At one o'clock, before they had inspected one-tenth part of the interesting features of this venerable edifice, they took leave of Westminster Abbey, promising themselves another and a longer visit, and they went to "Simmons'" to lunch.

At two o'clock they visited St. Paul's Cathedral.

Time and space would fail us here to give the slightest outline of the wonders of that most wonderful cathedral. The mere ascent of St. Paul's from the crypt to the cupola might be, in some degree, compared to the ascent of Mont Blanc—at least in toil and fatigue, if not in danger and distance. To give the most cursory description of its marvels of architecture, sculpture, paintings and decorations, would fill volumes and be out of place here. After three or four hours spent there, our party returned to their hotel, utterly wearied, dazzled and distracted; and with only two images standing out distinctly from the magni-

ficent chaos in their minds—the mausoleums of Lord Nelson and the Duke of Wellington, the great sailor and the great soldier of England standing side by side in the crypt of the Cathedral.

"My dear," said the General, that evening over his cup of tea, "when we laid out our plans for this week we had no idea what was before us! No wise man crowds so much sight-seeing into so little time. It is as wrong to surfeit the brain as it is to overload the stomach. As for me I am suffering from a mental indigestion, and I would rather not attempt Windsor Castle, or any other stupendous place or thing, until I have got over Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral. So what do you say to postponing all sight-seeing for the remainder of this week?"

Drusilla and Anna eagerly assented; for, in truth, they wanted some leisure for shopping and for arranging toilets in which to appear at the minister's ball. And Dick was too polite to offer any opposition.

So the next day, while the General and Dick stayed at home to lounge, read, or smoke, Anna and Drusilla drove to the West End, and ransacked all the most fashionable stores in Oxford, Regent, and Bond streets in search of new styles of flowers, laces, gloves, and so forth.

And never did the vainest young girl, in her first season, evince more anxiety about her appearance than did poor Drusilla, who was not vain at all. But then the young wife knew that she would be sure to meet her husband at the minister's ball, and that her future happiness might depend upon so small a circumstance as the impression she might make there. For once in her innocent life, but for his sake only, she longed for a social triumph.

CHAPTER XX.

THE AMBASSADRESS' BALL.

I do not question what thou art,
Nor what thy life in great or small;
Thou art, I know, what all my heart,
Mustb eat or break for. That is all.

—OWEN MEREDITH.

THE front of that handsome house in Cavendish Square, known then as the American Embassy, blazed with light.

Not only the street before it, but the cross-streets around the corners were thronged with carriages.

Our Ambassadress was giving her first ball of the season and the élite of London were to honor it with their presence.

Many another house would have been crowded to suffocation with the company that assembled in this; but here, so spacious were the corridors and staircases, so *very* spacious the halls and saloons, that the seven hundred fair and noble guests wandered through the decorated and illumined rooms, refreshed by pleasant breezes and inspired by delightful music, and all without the usual accidents of crushed toilets and crossed tempers.

In the first reception room, near the entrance door, stood the distinguished ambassador and his accomplished wife receiving their friends with their usual cordiality. The ambassador wore the dress of a plain American citizen; the ambassadress was resplendent in mazarine blue velvet and diamonds.

At about half-past ten o'clock General Lyon and his party were announced and entered the first reception room. The General and his nephew wore the stereotyped evening costume of gentlemen—the black dress-coat and black pantaloons and the white vest and white kid gloves.

Anna wore a mauve *crêpe*, looped up with white roses; and white roses in her hair and in her bosom, and pearls and amethysts on her neck and arms.

Drusilla's toilette was perfect. It was a full dress of priceless point lace over a pale maize colored silk. In her hair, on her bosom, and looping up her dress, were clusters of snowdrops and crocuses, sprinkled with the dewdrops of fine diamonds. The effect of this simple and elegant toilette was rich, delicate and beautiful beyond comparison.

General Lyon and his young friends had to stand a few moments, while a group who had passed in before them paused to pay their respects to the host and hostess.

At length, when their own turn came, the General took precedence of his nephew and led Drusilla up to the ambassadress. First he shook hands heartily with his old friend the ambassador and bowed to the ambassadress, and then presented Drusilla as:

"My niece, Mrs. Lyon."

Drusilla curtsied deeply, and the minister and his wife received her kindly. And after a few commonplace courtesies the General passed on to make room for Dick and Anna, and also to look out for some of his own friends in the crowd.

But ah! what a suppressed buzz went through the room as the veteran passed, with the newest beauty of the season hanging on his arm.

"What an exquisite young creature!" lisped young Leslie of the Guards.

"Who is she then?" inquired Beresford of the Hussars.

"Don't know, I am sure. Does anybody here? Do *you*, Kill.? You look as if you did," said Leslie, turning to Lord Killcrichtoun, who was standing like a statue staring after the retreating form of General Lyon and Drusilla, who were speedily lost in the crowd.

The question recalled him to himself.

"Do I—what?" he inquired, with assumed carelessness.

"Do you know that lovely girl who passed just now, hanging on the arm of that tall, gray-haired old gentleman?"

"What girl? I noticed no *girl* particularly."

"Chut! are you subject to catalepsy, Kill.?" laughed Leslie.

"But who *can* she be? Some girl that is just out, I suppose. Somebody must know. Let's go and ask Harry. He knows everything," said Beresford, moving off.

"Stop—find out who the old gentleman is first. He looks like a foreigner, and she must be his daughter," suggested the Guardsman.

"Oh! by the way! that is it!" suddenly exclaimed the Hussar.

"What is it? Have you made a discovery?"

"Yes! you said he looked like a foreigner; and so the whole thing flashed upon me at once. He is the Prince Waldemar Pullmynoseoff. Her Majesty received him yesterday. He has a daughter. The Princess Shirra."

"Why, certainly! of course! undoubtedly! how could we have missed seeing it at once."

And so these young men, upon their own sole responsi-

bility, settled the rank of the simple republican gentleman and lady.

And Alexander Lyon, or Lord Killcrichtoun, smiled as he heard this.

While they spoke several of their acquaintances came lounging up. One of them, a fair young man with straw-colored hair and mustache, spoke:

"We have just seen the loveliest little creature. Can any of you tell who she is?"

"Now, in the first place," said Leslie, maliciously, "where there are so many lovely creatures present, how are we to know which you mean?"

"Oh, you cannot mistake if you have seen her! the most perfect beauty of the season. She wore—there now I cannot tell you what she wore: but her dress was the most elegant as she was the most beautiful in the room," persisted the young man, pulling at his fair mustache.

"Now look here, Duke—taste in beauty and taste in dress differ so much, you know. How can I tell what individual girl you mean when you talk of the most beautiful creature in the most elegant toilet in the room? Why, there are hundreds of beautiful women in elegant toilets present, and each one of them may be the *most* beautiful and the *most* elegant to some one else's particular fancy.

"Ah! bah, Leslie, that may be all very true of commonplace beauties; but I tell you, and you know it is true, that there are *some* beauties whom *every* body acknowledges to be pre-eminent; and of such is the sweet creature who passed here like a beam of sunshine—an exquisite creature! Stop chaffing now and tell me, if you know, who she is."

"Was she leaning on the arm of a tall, gray-haired gentleman?" asked Leslie, laughing.

"Yes! yes!"

"Oh, then, yes, I know her. She is the Princess Shirra, daughter of Prince Waldemar Pullmynoseoff. He is here on a visit; some say on a private mission. Her Majesty received him yesterday."

"Daughter of old Pullmynoseoff. I'll go and get introduced," said the young duke, hurrying away.

Again Alexander laughed within himself. He was

somewhat amused by the mistake those discerning gentlemen had made in supposing Drusilla to be the little Russian princess; but he was also bitterly jealous of the admiration so generally expressed for his beautiful, young, forsaken wife; and he was deeply indignant that men should take her for a girl to be wooed and won.

He followed the duke. He could not help it. He wanted to see the end of this adventure, in which the young duke went in search of Drusilla and the Princess Shirra, both in one. He followed him through the mazes of the whole suite of rooms; and everywhere he heard the same suppressed murmur of admiration, curiosity and conjecture of which the new beauty was the subject. Others beside the group of officers took her for the newly-arrived Russian Princess.

"Look at her diamonds—a shower of dewdrops over her flowers," murmured one lady.

"They cannot *all* be real. Some must be paste among so many," objected another.

"Paste! Look at her point-lace dress, then, more costly still than her diamonds. *None* but a princess of the highest rank could wear such a priceless robe."

Alexander passed on, leaving these people to their dispute, and followed the young duke until he stopped before a group of ladies and gentlemen. The ladies were seated on the sofa, and the gentlemen were standing before them.

The duke bowed and exchanged the courtesies of the evening, and then, turning to one of the gentlemen, said:

"Lord John, you presented the Prince Waldemar Pullmynoseoff to Her Majesty yesterday. Will you be good enough to present me to the prince this evening?"

"With pleasure, Lillespont. Come!" said the Lord John, at once turning to lead the way.

"I think his daughter decidedly the most beautiful woman in the house," said the Duke of Lillespont as they threaded their way through the crowd, closely followed by Alexander. "Unquestionably the most beautiful woman here," repeated His Grace, as if challenging contradiction.

"Do you? I am rather surprised to hear you say so," observed Lord John.

"The most beautiful woman I have ever seen—that is,

if one may call so young a creature a woman at all," he added.

"Young?" repeated Lord John, raising his eyebrows. "Ah, but then you are at a time of life when all women's ages are alike, I suppose."

And, saying this in rather a low tone, Lord John paused before a gentleman and lady seated on a sofa, around which quite a court of worshippers were gathered.

Waiting for a few minutes for a fair opportunity, and then gently making his way through the circle, Lord John took his protégé, and said:

"Prince, permit me to present to your Highness the Duke of Lillespont; Duke,—Prince Waldemar Pullmynoseoff!"

And, before the young duke could recover from his surprise and disappointment, he found himself bowing deeply before a little dry, rusty, scrubby, hairy old gentleman, who looked more like a very aged and very cunning monkey than a man, not to say a prince. However, he was certainly a European celebrity, filled full of diplomacy, covered over with orders, and possessed a string of titles—all told—a yard and a quarter long. So the duke bolted his disappointment and bowed his body low before the royal and venerable mummy.

And then he was presented to a little, withered woman, very like the prince, and looking very little younger, but so covered with jewels of all sizes and colors that she presented the idea of an elderly fire-fly.

Again the duke bowed low, and exerted himself to be agreeable, but he was very glad when the coming up of another party gave him an excuse to make his final bow and withdraw.

Alexander, grinning like Mephistopheles, still followed.

"I was quite mistaken in the princess. It was another whom I took to be Prince Waldemar's daughter," said Lillespont, deeply annoyed that he should have led any one to believe so ill of his tastes as that he should have fallen in love with the elderly fire-fly.

"Hem! I thought you had made some mistake of the sort," said Lord John kindly.

"Oh, yes, quite another sort of person! a lovely young creature, just out of the schoolroom, I should say. Ah,

there—there she is now, sitting within that window!" suddenly exclaimed the young man as an opening in the crowd, like a rift in the clouds, showed a vista at the farther end of which a bay window lined with lilies and roses and occupied by General Lyon and his party, and by a select circle of their particular friends.

"There! that lovely, dark-eyed houri, looking the very spirit of spring and youth, clothed with sunshine, adorned with flowers, and spangled with diamond-dew! Do you know her?"

"Know her? Stop,—let me see. I know that party she is with. I met them here at this house a few mornings ago. Let me see,—there is General Lyon, and Mr. and Mrs. Hammond, and—yes, the young creature you admire so justly is Mrs. Lyon."

"'*Mrs.*—did you mean to say 'Mrs.?'"

"Yes, 'Mrs.' I remember perfectly well being as much surprised as you are at seeing so child-like a creature introduced by a matronly title."

"But she is never the wife of that old man? It would not—that sort of union—be May and December, it would be April and January!"

"Oh, no, she is not his wife—she is his niece, I think. Yes, I am sure he introduced her as his niece, Mrs. Lyon."

"*Mrs.* Lyon? that child."

"Well, I tell you, I was as much surprised as you are to hear her called so; but then I reflected that in America, as in all young nations, people marry at a very early age."

"Ah! but where is *Mr.* Lyon?" very pertinently inquired Lillespont.

"Oh, Mr. Lyon? I don't know that there is any Mr. Lyon. I have somehow or other received the impression that this childish beauty is a young widow, and a very wealthy one also."

"A youthful, beautiful, and wealthy widow," said Lillespont, musingly. "Lord John, you say you know her,—will you introduce me?"

"With pleasure,—come," said the elder man, leading the way to the bay-window.

Alexander followed them no further, but muttering to himself:

"Ass, puppy, coxcomb!" and other injurious epithets

—probably applied to Lillespont—withdrew to a convenient spot from which, unseen, he could see all that might be going on in the bay-window.

He saw the old gentleman called Lord John take Lillespont up and present him to General Lyon, who forthwith presented him to the ladies of his party. And next he saw the young duke bow deeply to Drusilla, and make some request, to which she graciously responded. And then he saw her rise and give her hand to Lillespont, who, with the air of a conqueror, led her off.

Alexander ground his teeth together with rage and jealousy.

They passed down the room and onward towards the dancing saloon, where new quadrilles were being formed. And the duke led his beautiful partner to the head of one set. And there as everywhere else a low, half-suppressed but sincere murmur of admiration followed her.

Alexander foamed with fury, and hurried away from the scene because he could not trust himself to remain.

Of course he had not the least right to be jealous or indignant, but just *because* he had no such right—and he knew it—he was all the more furious. It enraged him to see her looking so beautiful, blooming, happy, and independent of him, enjoying herself and exciting universal admiration in society, when he thought, by rights, she ought to be pale, and sad, and moping in some obscure place. It infuriated him to see her the object of another man's homage.

"And that puppy, perdition seize him! takes her to be a young widow; is thinking now perhaps of asking her to be his wife! His wife!" And here Alexander ground down unuttered curses between his set teeth.

Ah, could he have looked into his young wife's heart, his anger must have been appeased. Could he have seen how little she cared for all the homage she received, except in so much as it might make her more worthy in his eyes. Truly she smiled on the young duke at her side—not because he was young and handsome and a duke, but because it was her sunny, genial, grateful nature to smile on all who tried to please her. Yes! to smile on all who tried to please *her*, while from the depth of her heart she sighed to please but one on earth.

Alexander found food enough for his insane jealousy. Drusilla was the acknowledged beauty of the season. Everywhere he heard her murmured praises. Every one supposed her to be a young widow. Some genius, indebted to his imagination for his facts, had fancied that because Mrs. Lyon the supposed young widow, was niece-in-law to old General Lyon, therefore the husband of Mrs. Lyon had been a military officer who had been killed in the war between the United States and Mexico; and had so effectually started the report that before the evening was over every one had heard that Captain Lyon had been shot while gallantly leading his company at the storming of Chepultepec. Of course this report never once reached the ears of the General or Mrs. Lyon, or of Mr. or Mrs. Hammond. Reports seldom do reach the ears of those most concerned in them; and false reports never.

But Alexander was doomed to hear it all.

"Kill, have you seen the newest beauty out?" inquired young Hepsworth of the Dragoons. "There she is dancing with Prince Ernest of Hohenlinden. She is engaged ten sets deep; but I come in for the eleventh for the Lancers. That is after supper. Look at her now, as she turns. Isn't she perfect? Just perfect?"

"Who is she?" growled Alexander, feeling himself called upon to say something.

"Who is she? Not Satan in the form of an angel of light, as one might judge from the tone of your question. She is Mrs. Lyon, a young widow, though you would hardly suppose her ever to have been a wife. But you know how early girls marry in America, stepping from the cradle to the altar, one might say. However, that young creature has been married and widowed. Husband, gallant fellow, lost his life in leading a forlorn hope in the storming of Chehuaple—Chehuapaw—Chehua-peltemback, or some such barbarously named place."

"Oh! he did, did he?"

"Oh, yes, bless you! And I am very much obliged to him for doing so; but she was perfectly inconsolable for three years. But she has at last left off her weeds, as you see. And we may suppose she is in the market."

"Ah! she is, is she?"

"Oh, yes! Lovely creature? And *stu*-PEN-*dously* rich too," exclaimed the dragoon.

"Oh, she is rich?" sneered Alexander.

"Rich? She's a California Crœsus. A great catch for some fortunate fellow!"

It would not do to take a gentleman by the throat and shake him there in the ambassadress' drawing-room; yet Alexander could scarcely refrain from laying hands on the dragoon who continued very innocently piling up wrath.

"Do you know, I think Lillespont is taken? Lillespont who has escaped all the man-traps set for him for the last four years, since he first appeared in the world? But then this young creature is such a perfect novelty! It would be of no use for a captain of dragoons to enter the lists against a duke, else hang me if I did not go in for the little beauty myself," said the young officer, complacently drawing himself up, sticking out a neat leg, and caressing his moustache.

"You are an ass!" exclaimed Alexander, turning on his heel and walking away.

The astonished dragoon gazed after him in a sort of stupor, and then, still pawing at his moustache, muttered:

"Per Bacco! what a rude savage! Very great bore, but I shall have to challenge him. And hang me if I have the least idea what the row is about. However, I must stay here until I keep my engagement with the little beauty for the Lancers, and then—to teach that uncivilized brute that he is not to indulge his savage propensities in ladies' drawing-rooms."

And so saying, the young fellow, who with all his effeminacy, was brave enough, sauntered away to look up a brother officer to act as his second, and afterwards to wait for his partner in the Lancers, his mind being equally occupied by the thoughts of dancing and dueling.

Meanwhile, Alexander had moved to another standpoint, from which, unseen by her, he could follow every movement of his beautiful and admired young wife.

"I suppose," he muttered to himself, "I shall have to meet that young coxcomb. For after what I said to him unless he is a poltroon as well as a puppy, he will challenge me. Well! I don't care a rush for my own life, and it is not likely that I should care for his——Yes! and by

all that is maddening, there is another fellow I shall have to fight!" he exclaimed, as he watched Prince Ernest of Hohenlinden, who was bestowing on the beauty of the evening much more devotion than it was at all necessary to show to a mere partner in the dance.

Just then the dance came to an end, and his Highness led Drusilla back to her seat beside Mrs. Hammond in the bay window.

Alexander followed, keeping out of her sight.

"I fear you are very much fatigued," said Prince Ernest, still retaining her hand, and gazing with respectful tenderness upon her flushed cheeks and brilliant eyes. "Let me bring you an ice," he continued, with affectionate solicitude.

"No, thanks," said Drusilla, courteously, but withdrawing her hand.

"A glass of water then?"

"Nothing, thanks."

"The rooms are very warm. Will you permit me to take you into the conservatory. It is open and airy there."

"Much obliged; but I am very well here," said Drusilla, sweetly.

"Permit me this privilege at least," pleaded the prince, gently possessing himself of her fan and beginning to fan her.

Alexander set his teeth and ground his heel into the floor, growling within himself:

"Confound him, what does he mean? I know I shall have to fight him!"

But if Alexander meant to call out all Drusilla's admirers, who, believing her to be a widow, were ready to become her lovers, he would have his hands as full of fights as the most furious fire-eater might desire.

While Prince Ernest was still standing before Drusilla fanning her, and in every admissible manner exhibiting his devotion to her, a very handsome, martial looking man, of about thirty years of age, wearing the uniform of an Austrian field-marshal, and having his breast covered with orders, came up and, bowing low before the beauty, claimed her hand for the quadrille then forming.

Alexander knew him for General Count Molaski, an officer high in the Austrian service, and one of the most

distinguished foreigners then in London. He led his lovely partner to the floor, where she was soon moving gracefully through the mazes of the dance.

"Her head will be turned!—her head will be completely turned! Who would ever have dreamed of her coming *here* to play the *rôle* of a beauty—of a queen of beauties—in society! Aye, and with a fortune of her own, and the countenance of General Lyon's family to sustain her in it. Perdition! I wish to Heaven she had never left Cedarwood—never inherited that fortune—never been taken up by that old Don Quixote, my uncle! *Then* I might have had some chance of a reconciliation with her; but now—I have no hope at all. If she has not already forgotten me, these flatterers will soon make her do so. Ah! great Heaven, I was certainly blind and mad ever to have left her! I always loved her—when did I love her not? And to have left her whom I did love for Anna whom I only admired! Why, look at Anna now. Only what is commonly called a fine woman here. There are a hundred in this room as pretty as Anna, but look at Drusilla, my wife—she *is* my wife, after all! She is the most beautiful woman present, and the best dressed. *My* choice has been endorsed by the verdict of the best judges of beauty the world possesses. She *was* my choice. *I* thought her all that these judges have decided her to be. Yes, yes, I thought her so when she was without the adventitious aids of wealth, rank, dress, and general admiration to enhance her charms! How could I have left her? I was mad—just mad! No lunatic in Bedlam ever madder!"

By this it will be seen that Alexander Lyon, Lord Killcrichtoun, had in his heart—for no one knows how long—returned to his first love—perhaps his only love—and was now consuming with a hopeless passion for his own discarded wife.

"When I first saw our boy, what a shock of mingled joy and pain the sight gave me! I scarcely needed the chambermaid's information that he was Mrs. Lyon's little son. I knew him at once from his likeness to his mother. True, he has the hair and eyes of our family, but he has his mother's beautiful brows and sweet lips. Ah! what a dolt! what an ass! what a pig I have been!" inwardly groaned Alexander, still grinding his teeth together.

But soon his rage was diverted from himself to Drusilla's partner.

"There she goes," he muttered—"swimming through the dance as happily as if I were not in existence, and were not so wretched. And, set fire to that fellow! how his eyes follow her and seem to feast—— Ugh! yes, I will be shot if I don't call him out!"

"Hallo, Kill.! how do you do? Good evening. Fine company assembled here this evening. Good many distinguished foreigners present—nearly the whole diplomatic corps also. But all that is nothing to the début of the celebrated beauty. You know her, of course," said young Frederic Dorimas, coming up to Alexander's side "You know her?"

"Know whom?" said Drusilla's husband, evasively.

"Why, the beautiful young widow who is turning all heads this evening."

"No, I know no young widow here."

"Then you are a very lucky fellow in having such a pleasure still to come; and I shall be happy to present you. Now, no thanks, my dear fellow, because I don't deserve them. My own heart and hand being already engaged to another young lady, I am not free to become a candidate for the beautiful widow's favor, and so I will not play the part of the dog in the manger. Come as soon as this dance is over, and I will take you up and introduce you."

"Much obliged; but I prefer to decline the honor," said Alexander, coldly bowing and turning away from his new tormentor.

"Eh, Kill., not dancing this evening? and looking as glum as if you had lost a sweetheart or a fortune. What's the matter? Did you bet on a losing horse, or fail to get an introduction to the lovely Mrs. Lyon?"

"Go to the demon with your lovely Mrs. Lyon!" burst out the sorely tried Alick.

"With great pleasure, or anywhere else in the universe with *her*. But, hark you, my lord! I am not accustomed to receive such answers from gentlemen; and by my life, sir——"

But Alexander had turned on his heel and walked off

again, leaving the last speaker in the middle of his speech.

Alick, in his utter wretchedness, was behaving very much like a brute. He had already insulted one gentleman and affronted another. He was sure of being called out by young Hepsworth of the dragoons, and he was strongly inclined to call out some half dozen other gentlemen who had been guilty of dancing with Drusilla and delighting in the honor.

He passed on, growling inward curses, and so for some moments lost sight of his young wife.

When he saw her next, she was seated in the bay window, with her court of worshipers around her. She alone occupied the sofa.

General Lyon was standing at some distance with a group of old friends that he had been so fortunate as to collect together.

Anna was waltzing with Henry Spencer.

Dick was waltzing with Nanny Seymour.

Drusilla never waltzed, and therefore for the time she was sitting alone on the sofa with her court standing around her.

There were Prince Ernest of Hohenlinden, General Count Molaski, the Duke of Lillespont, and one or two others of the same class.

Drusilla exhibited none of the awkwardness of a novice under such trying circumstances. The only lady in the circle, she was nevertheless not only self-possessed and graceful, but she was animated and witty. She kept the ball of conversation quickly flying back and forth, so that those about her forgot the passage of time until the cessation of the waltz music and the commencement of a march, followed by a general movement of the company in one direction proclaimed the opening of the supper rooms.

With a bow, Prince Ernest asked the honor of taking Mrs. Lyon in to supper.

With a smile of thanks, she accepted the courtesy, and arose.

And he drew her arm within his own, and proudly led her off.

They passed so near Alexander that he might have

stepped upon her dress. But she never turned her eyes in his direction.

"She has forgotten me—clearly and finally forgotten me! But I will be hanged if I don't make somebody sensible of my existence before the night is over!" said Alexander to himself as he followed them.

At supper the prince waited on the beauty with as much devotion as ever courtier offered to his queen.

Near them stood Anna, served by Henry Spencer and Nanny Seymour waited on by Dick.

There was really nothing at which Alexander had the least right to take exception. Yet his blood was boiling with jealousy so that he was actually almost frenzied.

After supper Prince Ernest led Drusilla back to her seat, and stood devoting himself to her service until the next dance was called and Captain Hepsworth came up to claim her as his partner in the Lancers.

Very sweetly Drusilla smiled on the young dragoon, as she gave him her hand and let him lead her forth to the dance.

But not Drusilla's smile of courtesy nor the young officer's simper of gratified vanity enraged Alick half so much as the air and manner assumed by Prince Ernest.

He, the prince, gazed after the retreating form of the beauty until she was lost in the crowd, and then with a profound sigh he took possession of her vacated seat, picked up a flower that might or might not have fallen from her bouquet, pressed it to his lips and put it in his bosom.

"I'll kill him for that, or he shall kill me! I hardly care which!" growled the maniac in the depth of his heart. He would have liked to throttle his Highness on the spot; and in refraining from doing so he only postponed his vengeance.

When the Lancers came to an end Drusilla returned, obsequiously attended by the young dragoon, and followed by General Lyon and all the members of her party.

Prince Ernest started up from the sofa and with respectful tenderness took Drusilla's hand and placed her in her seat, and remained standing beside her.

"My dear, it is four o'clock, and you look very tired—

had we not better go?" inquired General Lyon, speaking in a low tone to Drusilla.

"Just as you and Anna please, dear uncle. As for myself, I am quite ready," she replied.

"So am I," said Mrs. Hammond.

"Come then," said the General, offering his arm to Drusilla.

"Pardon me, sir, if you please. I will have the honor to attend Madam!" exclaimed Prince Ernest.

With a bow and a queer smile the General gave way.

And the prince bending before the beauty, took her hand and drew her arm within his own and led her on.

And Alexander from his covert saw all this; and breathing maledictions, followed them, first to the presence of the ambassador and ambassadress, before whom they paused to make their adieux, then to the cloak room, where he saw Prince Ernest take Drusilla's bouquet and hold it with one hand, while with the other hand he carefully wrapped her in her mantle; then he followed them down-stairs to the hall, where they all had to stop and wait some time before their carriage could come up—and finally to the sidewalk, where he saw Prince Ernest carefully place Drusilla in her carriage, and tenderly lift her hand to his lips as he bade her good-night. Saw him then gaze upon the faded bouquet that he had taken from the beauty, who had probably forgotten to reclaim it—gaze upon it, press it to his lips, and place it, as some priceless treasure, in the breast of his coat.

That last act of folly filled up the measure of the prince's offences. It maddened Alexander. Henceforth he was no more responsible for his actions than a lunatic.

Going up to Prince Ernest, he clapped him smartly upon the shoulder.

The prince whirled around with an involuntary expression of surprise and anger.

"You, sir, I want a word with you!" exclaimed Alexander, breathing hard between his set teeth.

"At your pleasure, sare, perhaps! But, first, who may you be?" replied his highness, with cool hauteur.

"There is my card, sir! I would be glad to have yours?"

"'Baron Killcrichtoun?' I do not know the name or title. Well, Baron, what is your will with me?"

"First, sir, that bouquet, which you have had the insolence to keep! Secondly, sir, satisfaction for the insults you have offered to a lady who is near and dear to me?"

"INSULTS!" exclaimed the excitable Austrian, jumping off his feet. "Insults! sare, I never offer insults to a lady in my life! Sare, you speak von untruth! Sare, you speak von large lie! Sare, it is I, myself, I, who will have von grand satisfaction!"

"So you shall! but first give me that bouquet!"

"Sare, I will give you no bouquet! Sare, I defend my bouquet with the best blood of my heart! Sare, by what right you demand my bouquet?"

"By a right too sacred to be talked of here! Give me the bouquet that you have stolen!"

"'Stolen!'" cried his highness, vaulting into the air, "Sare, I will put back that word down your t'roat with the point of my rapier, sare! I will have von grand, von very grand satisfaction, sare!"

"All right! I will send a friend to you this morning, to arrange the terms of a meeting," said Alexander, turning away.

"Make your testament, sare! I advise you, set your house in order, sare!" exclaimed the Austrian, shaking his hand aloft. "Make your testament, sare! for, for me, myself, I will have von grand satisfaction! von very grand satisfaction!"

CHAPTER XXI.

ALEXANDER'S EXPERIENCE.

Words of fire and words of scorn
I have written—let them go!
Words of hate—heart-broken, torn
With this strong and sudden woe.
All my scorn, she could not doubt,
Was but love, turned inside out—OWEN MEREDITH.

"ALICK, are you mad? Think what you do!"

Alick turned quickly and faced Dick Hammond, whose hand had touched his shoulder.

"Mr. Hammond, you here? By what right, sir, do you dare——"

"By the right of kinship. Come, come, Alick, your father and my mother were brother and sister. We are first-cousins and old playmates, Alick. We have been rivals, but are so no longer. We need not be enemies. Let us be friends, Alick," said Dick, frankly holding out his hand.

"And do you begin your overtures of friendship by dogging my footsteps and spying my actions?" demanded Alexander, putting his hands behind him.

"Nonsense—no!"

"Why are you here then, sir? your party have gone home."

"Our carriage was full. I lingered behind to call a hansom for myself, and so became an accidental witness to your challenge of Prince Ernest," said Dick, good-humoredly.

The name of his imaginary rival sent Alexander off into another fit of frenzy.

"Yes, I have challenged the diabolical villain, and, by my life, I will meet him!" he exclaimed, grinding out the words between his set teeth and livid lips.

Mr. Hammond knew that to argue with him then and there upon the subject of the intended duel would be as useless as to reason with a lunatic. Yet, in a few hours, he hoped he might be able to bring him to his senses.

So, laying his hand kindly upon the demoniac's arm, he said:

"Alick, go home with me, or permit me to go home with you, while we talk this matter over."

"No!" exclaimed the madman violently, throwing off the friendly grasp. "Leave me to myself—I advise you to do so!"

"Alick, I dare not leave you, in your present state of mind. Even if we were not cousins, we are still countrymen! Consider me your sincere friend, and take me with you in this crisis of your affairs," pleaded Dick again, gently essaying to restrain the infuriated man.

"No! leave me alone, I say, Hammond! for your own good, take care of yourself and don't interfere with a desperate man!" cried Alexander, breaking loose.

A hansom-cab was passing at the moment.

"Cab!" cried Alexander, seeing that it was empty.

The hansom pulled up, and Alexander threw himself into it, and was gone before Dick could prevent him.

"I must get another, and follow him if possible," said Mr. Hammond, making the best of his way to the nearest cab-stand.

Meanwhile, General Lyon, Anna, and Drusilla returned to their lodgings.

General Lyon, after a few moments of gay bantering of Drusilla upon her social triumphs of the evening, went to rest.

Drusilla, as soon as she was free, hurried to her own room, to look after her little son.

Lenny was sleeping very quietly in his crib, beside his mother's bed; although, indeed, as the first beams of the morning sun were now glinting through the crevices of the window-blinds, it was almost time for Master Lenny to wake up for his morning bath and airing.

And now what did the queen of the ball do?

Tearing off her jeweled wreath of spring-flowers, and throwing aside her gems, she cast herself down upon her child's bed and burst into a passion of tears, and wept and sobbed as if her heart would break.

It was not her sobs or tears that awakened little Lenny. They were too silent even in their vehemence to disturb the child's serene rest. It was probably his hour to wake. He opened his eyes, and, seeing his mother in so much grief and believing from his brief experience that nothing but his own naughtiness ever grieved "Doosa," he put his arms around her neck, and said;

"Don't ky, Doosa—don't ky! 'deed Lenny be dood boy!"

"Oh, Lenny, Lenny! love me, or my heart will break!" she cried, gathering the child to her bosom and pressing him there.

"Lenny do love—don't ky! 'deed Lenny be dood boy—'deed Lenny will!" said the child, kissing and hugging her fondly.

"My darling child, you are the only comfort I have in this world," she sobbed, as she squeezed him to her bosom and covered him with kisses.

"Hey-day! There, I knew it! and that is the reason I came in," said a voice in the open doorway.

Drusilla looked up and saw Anna standing there.

"I was on my way to my own room, but found your door ajar, so I took the liberty to look in," said Mrs. Hammond.

"Come in, dear Anna. But I should think you would be tired enough to hurry off to bed."

"No, not yet; I haven't got over the excitement of witnessing your success, Drusa. And I have so much to say about it before I can sleep. And besides Dick hasn't got in yet."

"Are you uneasy about him, Anna?" sympathetically inquired Drusilla.

"Not at all. I suppose he hasn't been able to pick up a cab and has perhaps started to walk home. Uneasy? No indeed! what is to hurt him in broad daylight? But, Drusilla, you have been crying! You have been crying hard! Now was it ever heard that the belle of the evening came home from her triumphs and cried?" said Mrs. Hammond, sitting down beside her friend.

"Oh, Anna! Anna! Oh, Anna! Anna! if you knew how little my heart was in it all! What *could* I care for all those strange people—I who only longed to be reconciled with my Alick!" she answered, bursting into a torrent of tears.

"He was there," said Anna, quietly.

"Do I not know it? He was there all the evening. He was near me many times. I felt that he was, though I did not see him; for oh, Anna, I was afraid to look towards him and meet again that cold and cutting gaze that almost slew me in the Tower!"

"Don't ky, Doosa! Please don't ky. 'Deed Lenny be dood boy. Let Lenny wipe eye," said the child, taking up the edge of his night-gown and trying to dry his mother's tears.

"My darling, you *are* good, and I won't cry to distress you, poor little soul. I should have died long ago if it hadn't been for you, my little angel. There, Doosa has done crying now," she said, wiping her eyes and smiling on the child.

"Drusa, my dear, you were very brilliant last evening,

not only beautiful, but brilliant. I really thought you enjoyed queening it in society. You laughed and talked and danced the whole evening. I should never have suspected you of playing a part."

"Oh Anna! I was not exactly playing a part either. Oh, Anna, you have heard how the timid Chinese sound a gong and make a terrible noise to drown their own fears and to dismay their foes when they go into battle? Anna, it was much the same with me. I had to laugh and talk and dance and jest to deafen me to the cry in my heart, which was almost breaking all the while. Oh, Anna, he has ceased to love me now! I know it, he has entirely ceased to love me!"

"I don't feel so sure of that myself, Drusilla. If you, were afraid to look at him, I was not. I saw him several times in the course of the evening; and whenever I saw him he was standing near you and following you with his eyes."

"He was? He was, Anna?" eagerly, breathlessly inquired the young wife.

"Indeed he was."

"You are sure?"

"Quite sure. I watched him."

"Ah, but—perhaps he did so in hate or in anger," said Drusilla, with a sigh.

Anna was silent.

"Say! was it not in anger or in hate, Anna?"

"I thought it was in jealousy, and that you know is a sign of love."

"Oh, if I thought so! if I thought so! how quickly I would set all that jealousy at rest. How soon I would convince my Alick that I care for but him in this whole world!" she exclaimed, fervently clasping her hands.

"Indeed, Drusilla, I hope you would do nothing of the sort. He richly deserves to suffer."

"Oh, Anna! you don't like Alick," said Drusilla, reproachfully.

"Like him? No, *that* I don't! That's the gospel truth. But there is Dick, so good-night, or rather good-morning, my dear," said Mrs. Hammond, kissing her cousin on the brow and then leaving the room.

"Oh, if I could believe as Anna suggests, how quickly,

how gladly I would set all my Alick's doubts at rest. But ah! it is not so. He has ceased to love me. I am sure of it now—sure of it!"

She struggled to keep back her tears, so as not to distress her child, who was still sitting on her lap and watching her countenance with eyes full of anxious sympathy.

As soon as Anna had left her, Drusilla rang for Pina, and with her maid's assistance changed her splendid evening dress for a cool white wrapper. Then, before lying down, she superintended little Lenny's morning bath and toilet, and saw him eat his simple breakfast and sent him out with his nurse for a walk.

Then at last she lay down to take an hour's rest, if not sleep, before joining the family at the late breakfast.

Meanwhile Anna hurried off to her own room. Anna was weary and drowsy, and with no heavy cares on her mind, was only anxious to find her pillow and go to sleep. But to rest was not to be Anna's good fortune that morning. She found Dick just come home, looking so haggard and harassed that his aspect terrified her into the suspicion that her "unlucky dog" had been so unfortunate as to meet with some of his friends.

"Dick! in the name of Heaven, what is the matter?" she exclaimed.

"Matter? Nothing," answered Mr. Hammond, telling unscrupulously, and almost unconsciously, the regulation lie in such cases made and provided.

"Dick! when a man says there is nothing the matter, with such a look as that on his face, it is a sign there is so much the matter that he dares not confess it. Now, Dick, I will know," she said, going to him, laying her hands upon his shoulders and gazing steadfastly into his face.

"Well, Anna, what do you see?" he inquired, a little sadly, as he met her eyes.

"I see that you are quite sober, at least, poor soul; but oh, Dick! you unfortunate fellow, where have you been since we left you!"

"About town, Anna."

"About town! Oh, yes, exactly! About town! I know too well what that means. Oh, Dick! Dick! we

ought never to bring you within sight of a town! We ought to keep you in the woods all the time. Now make a clean breast of it, Dick. Whom have you been with?"

"I happened to meet with an old friend down town," answered Dick, solemnly and a little maliciously.

"An old friend down town! Oh, precisely! I know what *that* means also! Dick! Dick! that proverb, 'Save me from my friends,' must have been written for you. Now out with it at once! How much has your friend, or set of friends, robbed you of this time?"

"Robbed me of, Anna?"

"Yes! robbed you of! You know what I mean. How much have you lost? A thousand pounds—ten thousand?"

"Anna, you think I have been gambling?"

"What else can I think, Dick? It breaks my heart to think it, though."

"Anna, dearest," said Dick, taking her hands from his shoulder and holding them in his own, while he sought her eyes, "Anna, did I not promise you before we were married, that after I should become your husband I would never touch cards or dice again? Answer me, Anna."

"Yes, Dick, you did, dear."

"And—bad as I was, at my very worst, did you ever know me to break my pledged word?"

"No indeed, I never did, dear."

"And do you think I would begin by breaking it to my wife?" he asked, gazing sadly into her eyes.

"Oh, Dick, Dick, my darling, I beg your pardon! I do indeed!" she said, throwing her arms around him and kissing him with such an effusion of affection that it must have consoled him for her momentary injustice. "Oh, Dick, forgive me, love!"

"All right, Anna," he said, smiling and returning her caresses with interest. "I cannot blame you for doubting and fearing for me, until time shall prove how steadfastly I shall keep my pledge to you. I only wish it could be otherwise with you, and that for your own peace you could have full faith in me; but I know that this cannot be so, for it must be a part of my punishment for past follies still to inspire doubt of my future conduct."

He spoke gravely and sadly, and the tears rushed to Anna's eyes as she answered him:

"Oh, Dick, darling, not so! I never doubted you before, and, after this, I *cannot* do so again. It was I who was a sinner, Dick, to doubt you at all, you dear, good, honest——"

—"Dog," added Dick, laughing; "for even an unlucky dog may still be an honest one. Yes, Anna," he added, after a pause, "I do think you may begin to trust me. We have been married about two years, and in all that time not only have I never touched cards or dice, but I have not even wished to do so. For your own peace of mind, try to trust me, my wife."

"I *do*, Dick! I do! It was only your look that alarmed me; and, as we were all safe at home here, I could not think of anything but your 'friends' that could happen to you. And, more than all, when I asked you what was the matter, you answered, 'nothing,' which, as I hinted before always means, 'Nothing could be worse.'"

"Well, Anna, it really was 'nothing,' in one sense of the word, 'nothing,' or not much to us that is."

"What was it, then?"

"Well, I suppose I may tell you without the risk of giving you any great pain. Alexander Lyon has gone mad with jealousy."

Anna at first looked startled, and then she burst into a hearty peal of laughter.

"I never saw a man out of Bedlam so frantic," continued Dick.

"I said so!" laughed Anna. "Who is he jealous of? You?"

"Of the whole world, I think!"

"I am very glad to hear it. I hope it will do him good."

"Yes, but he has challenged Prince Ernest of Hohenlinden," said Dick, solemnly.

Anna became very grave.

"And if he should not be prevented he will fight him."

"Fight a duel! Dick, do you know what you are saying? Are you in your senses?"

"I am. It is Alick who is mad."

"Fight a duel! What! in this age and in this country?"

"Yes, in this age and in this country, my dear! And I do not see, for my part, how it can be helped—I mean prevented—except by the police. I saw the whole thing, Anna. Just as your carriage drove off, Alick claps his hand upon the prince and charges him then and there with insulting a lady and stealing a bouquet. You should have seen Prince Ernest then. Talk about the Germans being phlegmatic! Though Prince Ernest is an Austrian, by the way. Why, Anna, he jumped two feet from the ground at the first charge, and vaulted four feet into the air at the second. If they are permitted to meet, he will eat Alick's head."

"A duel in England! and at this time of the world!"

"But you must remember that it is not to be between Englishmen, but between an Austrian and an American and not, probably, in England; but upon some of the little islands of the channel."

"I thought duels had gone out about the time that railroads came in," said Anna.

"So did I."

"Didn't you speak to Alick? Didn't you try to prevent the challenge?"

"Of course I did, but with what hope of success? I might as well have preached to the winds as to Alexander; and as to Prince Ernest, after the first words had passed, it would have been quite hopeless as well as very presumptuous to have tried to expostulate with him. I did not even attempt it. He had been outraged, grossly outraged, and was in a towering passion that even overtopped Alexander's fury. And if Alick had not challenged the prince, the prince would have challenged him."

"But the duel must be stopped!"

"Of course, if possible."

"What can be done?"

"Our only hope is in the police. It was in this view of the case, and not in any prospect of a successful interview with Alick, that I jumped into a cab and tried to follow him and find out his address; but he had a minute's start of me, and so of course I lost him. I drove to Mivart's; but he does not stop there, I was told. I went on specu-

lation to several places where I hoped to hear of him; but without success. Lastly, I did what I should have done at first—went to Scotland Yard and lodged information of the projected breach of the peace with the police. Then I came home. So you see, my dear, it was my anxious night race through the London streets that gave me the haggard look of a ruined gamester."

"It was nice of you, Dick, to take so much trouble to save that good for nothing fellow. Shall you tell Drusa?"

"Of course not. You would not advise me to do so?"

"No; for it would be useless as well as painful for her to know anything about it."

"You will tell grandpa?'

"Yes; as soon as he is up and has had his breakfast, I must consult with him as to what further can be done. Now, Anna, dear, you had better try to get a little sleep before breakfast; as for me, I shall go and take a bath and get a cup of coffee, and be off to Scotland Yard again, and be back time enough to meet my uncle when he appears."

So saying, Dick rang for his valet and disappeared.

But sleep was driven far from Anna for that day. She, too, found her best restorative in a bath, a change of dress, and a cup of strong coffee. Having drank this last, she went down into the drawing-room to wait for the other members of the family.

But even there she could not be at rest, the news of this intended duel had excited her so much; and not that she cared for her cousin Alexander, either, but that she cared for Drusilla: and she was anxious for the return of Dick, to know whether the detective policemen had succeeded in tracing Alexander in time to stop his murderous and suicidal purpose. She walked from window to door, and from door to window, unable to sit still; she took up a book, and laid it down; tried her embroidery frame, and cast it aside, unable to read or work; she opened her piano, but could not play. So she maundered about until the family circle began to gather.

The first that appeared was little Lenny, in the arms of his nurse. He looked fresh, bright and gay from his morning walk, and was full of chatter about a monkey and an organ grinder.

Next came Drusilla, looking rather pale, but very pretty

in her plainly banded dark hair and her cool white morning dress. She greeted Anna, and then sat down and called her child to her knee, and began to ask him about his morning walks. And Lenny, having found his most interested hearer, chattered away faster than ever.

The third comer was General Lyon, looking quite refreshed after several hours of undisturbed repose.

"Good-morning, my dears. I hope I have not kept you waiting," he said, as he saluted the two ladies.

"Oh no, sir; we are almost just assembled," said Drusilla.

"Then, my dear Anna, ring and order breakfast at once. But where is Dick? At the nearest mews, giving his opinion of the proprietor's latest purchase, I dare say."

"Oh, no, sir. He is not there; but he did not feel like sleeping, so he took a bath and dressed and went out to take a walk. He told me he would be back in time for breakfast," said Anna.

"And you would have thought Anna was some young girl waiting a visit from her betrothed, to have seen her go from one window to another, and gaze out up and down the street," said Drusilla.

"Anna, you do look a little nervous and excited; what is the matter?" anxiously inquired the General, for he, too, feared that the 'unlucky dog' might again have broken bounds and given her trouble. "What is it, Anna?"

"It is loss of rest, grandpa. I could not sleep, so I did not even lie down. These late hours are a terrible tax on a country-bred woman like myself," replied Anna, evasively.

"To everybody, Anna. I must really put my veto upon parties for *every night.* For once a week now I would consent to them——But here is Dick at last!—Why the deuce don't that fellow serve breakfast! Did you ring, Anna?"

"Yes, sir; and I hear the jingling of cups on a tray and so I suppose he is coming," said Anna, answering her grandpa, but looking anxiously at her husband as he entered the room.

Dick saw that troubled gaze, and smiled to reassure her. Then, after greeting the General and Drusilla, he turned to Anna and said, metaphorically, but in a way that she understood:

"I think I can get that horse I went after, Anna."

"There! I knew he had been to a stable, and Anna said he hadn't," laughed the General.

"I did not know that he had gone to one, grandpa."

"Of course you did not, my child, or you wouldn't have spoken so. But you see, I knew him better even than you did. And now let us have breakfast."

As soon as the morning meal was over, Drusilla took little Lenny and retired to her own room. This was not her custom in the forenoon; but on this occasion she acted with a purpose. She had not failed to see that both Anna and Dick were seriously disturbed, and that they wished to be alone with the head of the family; but she had not in her thoughts connected their disturbance in any manner with her own husband. On the contrary, she, too, unjustly suspected poor Dick of having in some manner fallen from grace—of having, perhaps, been tempted to a gambling table and lost more money than he could just then conveniently pay, and of being forced to apply to the General. So hard, you see, it is for a young man who has once lost the confidence of his friends, to recover it, even from those who love him best. So never suspecting that Alexander was on the verge of crime and death, but sighing over the supposed danger of poor Dick, Drusilla sat down with little Lenny in her own chamber.

As soon as the party in the breakfast parlor was left alone, General Lyon rang for the waiter to take away the breakfast service, and when that was done, he turned to his young people and said, somewhat sternly, for he still suspected Dick:

"Now, then, what is it? Speak out. Let us hear the worst, and hear it at once, for Heaven's sake."

"You should have heard it at once, but we could not say anything about it before Drusilla," said Dick.

"I suppose not. But she is gone now, so why do you hesitate? What is the matter?"

"Sir, it is this: Alexander Lyon has challenged Prince Ernest of Hohenlinden."

"Good Lord! is the man mad?" exclaimed the General

"Of course he is. Every man is mad who challenges another to mortal combat."

"Great Heaven! what is to be done? How did you

know this, Dick?" demanded the General, starting up and beginning to walk the floor with rapid strides, as was his custom when greatly excited. "How do you know this, Dick, I ask?"

Mr. Hammond related the discovery he had made on the morning after the ball.

"But, good Heaven! this purpose cannot be carried out in a Christian and civilized country. I do not think that at this day of the world any two Englishmen would ever think of such a barbarism as fighting a duel, and you may depend that no two foreigners are going to be allowed to do it. Duel indeed! Chivalry is dead, and law reigns in its stead. Dick, you and I must go before some magistrate and give the information. We must go at once. I'll put on my boots; you call a cab," said the General, excitedly.

"Sir, I went immediately and laid the information before the Chief of Police at Scotland Yard. He promised to take prompt steps to arrest the challenger and prevent the hostile meeting. An hour ago I went again to the office, and learned that two detectives had been sent in pursuit of the parties. They had not yet returned to report at the office."

"And that is all you know?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then we must go all the same. I cannot rest quietly here while my dead brother's son is in peril, even if he is a fool and a madman!—Jake!" he called to his passing servant, "bring my boots to my room, and then run and call a cab. And, my dear Anna," he said, turning to his granddaughter, "put a guard upon your face as well as upon your lips, in Drusilla's presence. She must not know what has occurred."

"I fear she already suspects something wrong," answered Anna.

"Oh, she probably thinks as you did, Anna—that I have got into a scrape. I saw how pitifully she regarded me as she left the room. She thinks I have fallen among thieves again. Well, let her continue to think so; better that than she should suspect the truth," suggested Dick.

"Indeed she shall not harbor a doubt of you, Dick, darling, even to save her from the pain of knowing the truth.

But never fear; trust to me to spare her feelings without compromising your character."

In a very few minutes the General came in booted and gloved for his drive. Dick was quite ready and the cab was announced to be waiting. And so with a few last words of warning and encouragement to Anna, they left her to go upon their anxious errand.

When they arrived at the office of the chief they received information that the two detectives who had been sent in pursuit of the would-be duellists had returned and reported.

And this was the substance of their report:

That Prince Ernest of Hohenlinden, with two gentlemen of his *suite*—being his physician in ordinary and his second; and that Lord Killcrichtoun, with two attendants, his second, and his servant, had left London by the eight o'clock train for Southampton.

"And what the mischief have they done that for?" inquired General Lyon, in perplexity.

"Their intention seems clear enough, I think. They mean to cross over to some one of the Channel Islands, where they think they may blow each other's brains out comfortably without interruption," answered the chief.

"And now what the deuce is to be done? They left at eight, you say? It is twelve now, and there is a train just starting, if I remember rightly; and it is too late to pursue them by this train; and there will not be another start until three o'clock, I think? At least such is my impression of the hours of the trains to Southampton, from looking over the time-table with young Spencer yesterday, before he went down to meet a friend who had come by the American steamer," said the General.

"Yes, you are quite right about the trains; and right also about the uselessness of attempting to pursue these madmen by rail. But I have telegraphed the police there to be on the lookout for them."

"And we can do nothing in the meantime?"

"Nothing but wait patiently."

"Can we wait here?" inquired the General.

"Certainly, if you can make yourselves comfortable, though it is not a pleasant place to ask you to sit down in."

"Thank you. We shall gladly avail ourselves of your kind permission. You see we are so very anxious on this subject, that we should like to be at hand when you receive an answer to your telegram. How long do you think it will be before you get it?"

"Can't say. If they received mine before the eight o'clock train from London reaches Southampton, they might have met the parties at the station and could have answered me immediately. If, however, the train reached there first, of course the parties might have got out and got off, and the officers would in that case have some trouble to look them up."

"So then you may get a telegram any moment now, or you may have to wait several hours," said Dick.

"Exactly," replied the chief.

"Then, uncle," said Dick, perceiving that their presence in the office really annoyed or, at least, incommoded the civil officer, "I think we will adjourn to the White Swan, which is only a few steps from this, and wait there until Mr. Harding receives his telegram, when perhaps he will be kind enough to send us word of the news."

"Yes, certainly, if you prefer that arrangement, though you are quite welcome to remain here, if you can make yourselves comfortable where there are so many coming and going."

"I thank you, but we will go to the White Swan," said the General, rising.

But just then the clicking of the telegraph-wire in the adjoining office was heard, and the chief raised his hands, saying:

"Be kind enough to stop. That may be the answer we expect now."

The General and Dick sat down and waited. A few minutes passed, and then a man entered from the telegraph office, and handed the chief a folded paper.

"Yes; here it is!" said Mr. Harding, opening and reading:

"*The parties reached here at ten o'clock and took the steamer for Guernsey at a quarter after. We wait orders.*"

"There you see, sir, it is as I feared! They got off before my telegram could have reached Southampton—before, in point of fact, it had been dispatched from

London. And it is as I suspected—they are going to one of the Channel Islands to kill each other at their leisure," said the chief.

"And now what the deuce is to be done? Can't they still be followed and stopped?"

"I fear not until they have accomplished their purpose. There is no other boat leaves for Guernsey until to-morrow."

"No other packet? But, good Heavens, can we not hire a yacht and go in pursuit of them? We can run down to Southampton by the next train, and, in so large a port as that, we could be sure of being able to charter a vessel for the trip."

"I fear, sir, I should not be justified in taking the responsibility of incurring so great an expense," said the chief, slowly.

"Oh, never mind the expense, man—I will take that upon myself! I would not grudge a thousand pounds to save my mad nephew from this meditated crime and folly. I will make you quite safe in regard to the expense, only I should wish you to send a sufficient police-force with me to stop the duel by force if it cannot be done by persuasion. Come! it is only half-past twelve o'clock now, and the train for Southampton don't start until three. You have two hours and a half to make up your mind and make all the necessary arrangements. Come, what do you say?"

"Oh, of course the thing can be done, sir, if you choose to incur the heavy expense of hiring the vessel. You can take two of our men with you, and procure two more at Southampton."

"All right! Now we must go back to our hotel to prepare for our journey. There is the address. Now how soon will you send the men up to us?"

"In an hour, sir, or at least in good time for you to reach the train; or they can join you at the station."

"I would rather they would come up within an hour at furthest to our hotel, for then I should feel surer of them, and if they do not report at the time specified, of course I should wait for them until we get to the station, and then miss them there, we should have to go down to Southampton without them. Send them to our hotel, if

possible, and as soon as may be, if you please, Mr. Harding."

"I will do so, General," answered the chief.

And the General and Mr. Hammond left the police office and returned to the Morley House.

Here a difficulty met them—how to account to Drusilla for their sudden journey without alarming her. Neither the General nor Dick had ingenuity enough to invent a means of satisfying her mind without telling her an untruth.

"We must leave it to Anna's wit," said Dick, as they entered the house. And the General assented.

On entering the drawing-room, they found no one there, except Master Lenny, attended by his nurse.

"Where are the ladies?" inquired the General.

"They are both in their rooms fast asleep, sir," answered Pina.

"Then go and wake up Mrs. Hammond, and ask her to come to us quickly here. And don't, upon any account, disturb Mrs. Lyon," said the General.

Pina left the room, with little Lenny lagging after her.

"It is very fortunate the two ladies are asleep, for now we can get Anna here, and talk to her alone; tell her all that we have learned, and warn her how to deal with Drusilla," said the General.

Pina soon returned, with Mrs. Hammond, who in her great anxiety to hear the news came into the drawing-room just as she had risen from her bed, with her white dressing-gown wrapped around her, and her fair hair flowing over her shoulders.

"And now?—And now?—What?" she eagerly, breathlessly demanded.

"Pina, my good girl, take little Lenny down to the walk," said the General. And when the nurse had taken the child from the room, he turned to Anna, and said:

"We know all that can be known now, my love."

"Good Heavens! they have not met with any fatal result?" she gasped.

"No, don't be alarmed! They have not met! but they have gone off to one of the Channel islands, to carry out their intentions. And Dick and myself are going to

follow them with police sufficient to stop the duel by force, if we cannot do it by persuasion."

"When do you leave?"

"By the three o'clock train. It is one now, and we should leave the house a little after two; we have not much more than an hour to prepare; so, my dear, I wish you would just order us up a lunch, and then go and see to having a change of underclothing and a few pocket-handkerchiefs put up for Dick and myself."

"Yes;—but now—Drusilla? She is asleep. Of course, you would not wish her disturbed?" said Anna, pausing at the door.

"By no means! For every reason, let her sleep until we are off. We must go without bidding her good-by And we must trust to you, Anna, to make our apologies to her, and also to explain our absence, without telling the cause of our journey."

"A most difficult task, my dear grandpa; but I will undertake it," said Anna, as she left the room.

The General and his nephew also went to their chambers to put themselves in what Dick called traveling rig. When they returned to the drawing-room they found their lunch on the table, and their two portmanteaus on the floor, and Anna presiding over these preparations.

"Half past one o'clock! We have scarcely an hour now to get our lunch and reach the train in time. Sit down at once, Dick," said the General, placing himself at the table.

Dick and Anna followed his example.

"Where is little Lenny? I would like him to take lunch with us this last time before we go. Where is he, Anna, my dear?" inquired the General.

"Dear grandpa, don't you know you sent him out to walk with Pina?"

"Oh! yes! so I did! That was to get rid of the girl while I talked with you," said the General, in a low tone, then raising his voice, he called to Jacob, who stood waiting at some iittle distance, and said:

"Here, you, Jake! Go out upon the sidewalk, or around the square, and see if you can find Master Lenny and his nurse; and if you can, then tell Pina to bring him home immediately, I wish to see him before I leave."

"Yes, sir, I'll find them. I saw them on the corner watching of a Punch and Judy, not half an hour ago," said the boy, bowing and leaving the room.

'I *do* want to see the little fellow, and kiss him good-by before we go," said the General, apologetically, as he poured for himself a glass of sherry.

"La, grandpa, you talk as if you were going to the antipodes," laughed Mrs. Hammond.

"I dare say I talk like an old fool, Anna, but I am very foolishly fond of that little fellow."

"Oh, grandpa, I did not mean to say anything of the kind, and I beg your pardon."

"Tut, tut, I knew you didn't. Come, Dick, have you got through ? "

"Very nearly. There is time enough, sir."

"I wouldn't miss the train for a thousand pounds. And bless my soul, those men from Scotland Yard have not reported yet. I do hope they will be punctual," said the General, impatiently.

At that moment the waiter appeared, and announced two persons below inquiring for General Lyon or Mr. Hammond.

"Our men at last," said Dick, "tell them to wait for us in the hall."

The waiter went out to take the message.

And the General and Dick completed their last preparations.

"And that child hasn't come yet!" exclaimed the General, very impatiently.

"Time enough, uncle—the cab hasn't come yet," said Dick.

But at that instant the waiter once more appeared and announced the cab.

"Let us go," said Dick.

"Not yet; we can wait five minutes for little Lenny. Waiter, will you oblige me by going out upon the sidewalk and looking for my servants, and if you find them tell them to come in immediately with Master Leonard. I want to see him before I leave town."

"Certainly, sir," said the man, hurrying from the room.

And General Lyon sat down to wait impatiently, while

Dick and Anna stood withdrawn into the bay window, making their adieux.

"Indeed, dear Anna," said Dick, "I would rather you should let Drusilla think it is some scrape of mine that has carried us off from London than that you should permit her to suspect the truth. It will not matter to let her deceive herself for a few hours or days, until the suspense and danger shall be over."

"I will do the best I can; but, oh, Dick! do you think that you can possibly be in time? in time to prevent a fatal meeting?" she anxiously inquired.

"We must try to do so; we must do our utmost and trust the event to Providence."

"Dick," said the General, impatiently interrupting them, "our five minutes are up, and neither little Lenny, our servants, or the waiter has returned. Pray, Dick, oblige me by going out for a few minutes to see if they are coming. I hate to trouble you, my boy, but I must kiss little Lenny before we go."

"Oh, I will look for him with pleasure, sir. I dare say he and his whole suite of attendants are gathered around some organ grinder, monkey, or dancing dog, and can't tear themselves away from the attraction," laughed Dick, as he hurriedly left the room.

Again the General sat down to wait, but being very restless and impatient, again started up and walked the floor with rapid strides for three or four minutes.

"Another five minutes gone!" he presently exclaimed —"another five minutes gone, and none of them returned yet; and now I have not a second more of time left. I will go down and look after them myself."

And so saying, he picked up his hat and rushed downstairs and out of the street door.

He met Dick, the waiter and Jacob, hurrying towards the house.

"Well! well! Where is little Lenny?" he quickly demanded.

"We cannot find him or his nurse anywhere," said the waiter.

"I saw them with the Punch and Judy half an hour ago. I reckon as they followed of 'em to some distant street," said Jacob.

"I do not think there is the slightest reason to be alarmed. Pina is quite capable of taking care of the child," remarked Dick.

"Oh, I am not in the least alarmed about little Lenny; I was only anxious to bid the little fellow good-by before leaving town; but, if I cannot do so, I must be content. Well, Dick, my boy, we must really now be off. We will run up and bid Anna good-by and go," said the General.

But Anna saved them the trouble. She came downstairs, followed by a porter bringing the travelers' portmanteaus, which were placed in the cab. The policemen were in waiting.

General Lyon and Dick kissed and blessed Anna, and commended Drusilla and little Lenny to her care; and then entered their cab, followed by their attendants, and their whole party set out for the railroad station.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE MISSING BOY.

Go, when the hunter's hand hath wrung
From forest caves her shrieking young,
And calm the lonely lioness;
But soothe not, mock not, my distress.—BYRON.

ANNA returned to the drawing-room to face the difficulty of her duty to keep Drusilla ignorant of the real cause of General LYON's and Richard Hammond's journey to Southampton, and to do this without either telling or acting a falsehood. She wished to put off the evil hour as long as possible, so as to have time to perfect her plan of action, and therefore she kept away from Drusilla's chamber and remained in the drawing-room.

Drusilla's sleep was long and unbroken. It was four o'clock in the afternoon before she joined Anna. She—Drusilla—looked refreshed and blooming.

"You have had a good nap," said Anna.

"Yes," said Drusilla, smiling, as she sat down, but looking all round as if in search of some one.

"You are looking for grandpa and Dick?" said Anna.

"Yes, and for little Lenny and Pina," answered Drusilla.

"Oh, little Lenny is out with his nurse," said Anna, willingly answering the easiest part of the observation first.

"And uncle and Dick are sleeping off their last night's fatigue, I suppose."

"No, poor souls! they are incurring more fatigue," said Anna, smiling, and trying to give a light and playful turn to the conversation.

"Why, where are they gone?" exclaimed Drusilla, raising her brows in surprise.

"On a nice little jaunt to Southampton."

"To Southampton? What is the occasion?"

"Well, you see, one of Dick's good-for-nothing 'friends,' or rather, to speak the exact truth, one of his former good-for-nothing 'friends' has been getting himself into trouble. Of course poor Dick must needs take pity on him, and so my poor fellow and my grandfather have both gone down to Southampton to get *him*—Dick's old friend—out of it."

"Ah! and that was the matter with Dick and uncle this morning at breakfast?"

"Yes. Dick had the subject on his mind, and wished to break it to grandpa, and grandpa saw that he had something to say to him, and was both longing and dreading to hear it; for, to tell the truth, I suppose he was fearing that Dick himself had got into a mess of some sort, and I dare say you were thinking the same thing, Drusilla."

"Well, perhaps I was; for our affections make us fearful for those we love, Anna; and you and Dick are just as dear to me as the dearest brother and sister could possibly be."

"Well, darling, I know that, and your love is not lost on us, you may be sure. Be at ease on our behalf, as it was not Dick but one of his old friends that got into a scrape."

"I am both glad and sorry. I am glad it was not Dick, and sorry that I did him the wrong to think it could have been. But—who was it, then, Anna, if I may ask?"

"Ah! now, my dear, that would be telling. I assure you Dick would not have told grandpa if he could have got along without his assistance; and he would not even have

told me, his wife, if he could have helped it. I am sure he would not like to tell any one else. Now you are not offended?"

"Offended? Oh dear, no—certainly not, Anna. Of course I see such delicate difficulties as I suppose this of Dick's friend to be, should be kept secret from all except those immediately concerned in settling them——I wonder why that girl doesn't bring little Lenny in?" said Drusilla, suddenly changing the subject, and going to the window to look out.

"Yes, it is time she did, indeed. I dare say she will be here with him in a few minutes," answered Anna, very glad to have weathered the storm she had so much dreaded.

"Anna, dear, what time did Pina take little Lenny out?" inquired Drusilla, rather uneasily.

"Immediately before luncheon."

"What time was that to-day?"

"About two o'clock."

"And now it is after four; and she has had him out more than two hours, in the hottest part of the day, too. What *could* have tempted her to take the child out at this time of the day?"

"Drusa, dear, this was the way of it: Grandpa and Dick wished to explain to me the necessity of their immediate departure for Southampton. Little Lenny and his nurse were in the room. Grandpa and Dick did not want any other listener than myself, so they told Pina to take the child down to the sidewalk, thinking, of course, that so careful a nurse would keep him in the shade. So you see the girl was not to blame for taking the child out; though certainly I think she *is* for keeping him out so long. But still I don't think you need be uneasy, Drusa. Pina is no strange nurse. You have known her well for three years, and she has had the care of your child for two, and has always proved herself worthy of the trust. I hope you are not uneasy about him?"

"Oh, no! That is, I know I have no reason to be so, for Pina takes as great care of him as I could myself, only I think mothers are always uneasy when their infants are out of sight. I *wish* she would return."

"Oh, she will be back in a few minutes," said Anna, cheerfully.

"Listen! there is some one coming up," said Drusilla.

Steps and voices were indeed heard near the room, and almost immediately there was a knock at the door.

"Come in," said Anna.

The door was opened by a waiter, who put in his head and said:

"If you please, my ladies, here is a policeman brought home your nursemaid almost in fits."

"Lenny! where is Lenny? Has anything happened to him? Have you brought home my child?" cried Drusilla, starting up and rushing to the door before Anna could even answer.

"My child! my child! where is my child?" she cried, clasping her hands in an agony of terror.

"My lady, from the girl's ravings I'm afeard she has—well, not to make it any worse than what it is—mislaid the child some'rs or other," said the policeman, coming forward half helping and half dragging Pina, who, as soon as she saw her mistress, sank with a gasp of mute anguish at her feet.

"Lenny! Lenny lost! Oh, Father! Oh, Heavenly Father, have mercy!" cried Drusilla, reeling back into the arms of Anna, who sprang forward to support her.

"The child missing! What do you mean? It cannot be! Pina, where is little Lenny?" demanded Anna, scarcely able to control her own terror and distress, even while she sustained the agonized mother. "Answer me, Pina, I say! Where is little Lenny?"

But Pina was past answering, past everything but grovelling at their feet and howling and tearing her hair.

"Has the girl gone suddenly mad and so lost the child? Policeman, where and under what circumstances did you find her? Waiter, bring forward that easy-chair."

The chair was rolled forward and Drusilla was eased into it, where she sat pale, and mute, every sense on the *qui vive* to hear the policeman's story. Terrified, agonized, yet with a mighty effort holding herself still and calm, the bereaved young mother sat and listened to the policeman's account of his meeting with the nurse, after the loss of the child.

"If you please, my ladies, I first saw her in the Strand,

tearing up and down the street, running after babies and nurses and bursting into shops and houses, and going on generally like one raving, distracted, with a rabble of boys at her heels hooting and jeering. So she being complained of by certain parties as she annoyed and I, suspecting of her to be a mad woman broke loose from Bedlam, or leastways making a great disturbance in the streets, I takes her into custody, and should have took her off to the station-house and locked her up, only she began to howl about the child she had lost, and I began to see what had happened to her and how it was ; and I asked her where she lived, and she told me and I brought her here ; and that is all about it, my ladies ; but if you can get more out of her nor I could, I think it would be well you should, and then maybe we could help you to get the child, my lady," said officer E. 48.

"Oh, missus ! missus ! kill me ! kill me ! it would be a mercy ! " cried Pina, wringing her hands.

"I think it would be justice, at least," answered Anna, sternly.

" Where did you lose sight of him, Pina ? " inquired the young mother, in a strangely quiet manner.

" Oh, missus ! oh, missus ! knock me in the head and put me out of my misery ! do ! do ! do ! " cried Pina, gnashing her teeth and tearing her hair, rolling on the floor and giving way to all her excess of grief and despair, with all the utter abandonment of her race.

" Pina ! " sternly exclaimed Anna Hammond, " unless you are coherent and tell us where you lost Lenny, we shall not know where to look for him. Speak at once ! where was it that you first missed him ? "

" Oh, ma'am ! Oh, Miss Anna ! Strike me dead for pity ! Oh, do ! oh, do ! " cried the girl, growing wilder every moment.

" Yes, ma'am, that was about all I could get out of her either. Begging and a praying of me to take her up and hang her because she had lost the boy. To hang her, to hang her, to hang her up by the neck until she was dead, dead, dead, was all her prayer."

" Waiter," said Drusilla, who, though agonized with grief and fear for her lost child, was now the most self-controlled and thoughtful of the party—" waiter, go

quickly and fetch a glass of wine to this girl. It may restore her faculties."

The man sprang to do the lady's bidding, and soon returned with a bottle of sherry and a glass.

Drusilla herself filled the glass, and kneeling down beside her, put it to the lips of the prostrate girl.

"No, no, no!" cried Pina, pushing away the glass, and spilling its contents—"no, no, no, I won't take it, I won't get better, I won't live! Somebody ought to smash me for losing little Lenny, and if they don't I'll die myself! I will! I will!"

"Pina! nobody blames you, at least I do not. Nobody wants you to die, or to be punished. Drink this, Pina, so you may be better able to tell me about my child," said Drusilla, gently, as she again offered wine to the girl.

"Oh, missus! Oh, missus! if it was poison I would take it cheerful, I would! for it do break my heart to look in your face and to think what I done!"

"You did nothing wicked, I'm sure. If you feel so much for me, drink this, for my sake, so that you may be better able to tell me about my child."

"I'll do anything for your sake, missus! goodness knows I will!" said Pina, as she swallowed the wine.

"Give her another glass, mum. She'll hardly feel that in her condition," advised the experienced policeman.

Drusilla hesitated. But Anna, less scrupulous, took the bottle and glass from her hand, filled the glass again and put it to Pina's lips with a peremptory:

"Drink this at once."

"Must I, missus?" asked Pina, turning to her mistress.

"Yes," answered Drusilla.

And Pina swallowed the second portion of wine.

"Now," said the policeman, after a few moments, extending his hand to Pina, lifting her up and placing her upon a chair—"now, my good girl, open your mouth and tell us all, how and about the loss of the child."

"Oh," cried Pina, bursting into tears afresh, "it was *him* at the bottom of it all, I know it was!"

"Who?" inquired E. 48.

"Him, Mr. Alexander, Mr. Lyon, Lord Killchristians,

as they call him over here. Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Oh, me! Oh, little Lenny!"

"His father!" exclaimed Drusilla, in a half suppressed tone. And she breathed somewhat more freely; for she felt that if Lenny were with his father, the child was in no immediate personal danger—nay more, that his detention was but temporary; that he would soon be restored to her again. She thought that her husband might have ceased to love her, but she knew that he never would deliberately do the deadly wrong of tearing her child from her. Still she was intensely anxious to hear the details of the abduction; but she was also extremely unwilling to admit strangers to a participation of the intelligence that involved so much of her private history and domestic sorrows.

All these thoughts and feelings passed rapidly through her mind, while Pina was giving her answer, so when the policeman would have continued the examination by asking:

"*Who* was at the bottom of it, did you say, young woman? did you say a gentleman and—a lord? How was that? And what lord was it?"

"Lord Killchristians! Mr. Alexander Lyon as used to was, and a notorious willyun too! and the child's own——"

Here Drusilla broke into the conversation:

"Officer, these are private matters. I thank you very much for having brought this poor girl safely home, and I hope you will accept this trifle in payment," she added, placing a sovereign in his hand. "You may leave us now. We will examine this girl, and if we find that your services should be required in the search, we will send for you; or you can call here in the course of an hour."

"Thank you, my lady. I will call and see if I am wanted at the time you say," answered the policeman, lifting his hand to his head by way of salute, and then leaving the room, followed by the waiter.

"Now then, Pina, you say that little Lenny's father has got him?" said Drusilla, trembling with excess of emotion, yet still striving to keep calm.

"Yes, ma'am, I suppose he has by this time," sobbed the girl.

"You suppose he has by this time? Pina, Pina! that is not what you said before. Pina, what do you mean? You surely said his father had him!"

"I said Mr. Lyon was at the bottom of it, ma'am—at the bottom of little Lenny's being carried off, I mean—and I stand to it, as he was!"

"Oh, Heaven! did not his father carry him off, then?"

"No, ma'am; not with his own hands, but he was at the bottom of it—I say it, and I stand to it!"

"Merciful Heaven! if his father did not carry him off who then did? Girl, girl! do you know how you torture me? I thought at first my Lenny had been lost by straying away from you; then you said his father was concerned in his disappearance: now you say his father did not take him? In the name of Mercy, who did? Speak—for the Lord's sake, speak quickly?"

"Oh, ma'am, I will—I will tell you all I know, but don't, don't look so—don't, ma'am, or you'll kill me!" sobbed Pina.

"TELL WHO TOOK THE CHILD THEN!" said Anna, speaking sternly and stamping her foot.

"I DON'T KNOW WHO DID!" burst, amid sobs, from Pina's lips.

Drusilla stifled the shrieks that were ready to burst from her lips.

"You don't know who did! Why, then, did you accuse Lord Killcrichtoun?" demanded Anna.

"I didn't accuse him, ma'am—I said as he was at the bottom of it," said Pina, who seemed to be unable to change her phraseology. "I said he was at the bottom of it, and I stand to it as he was!"

"Oh, Anna, Anna, time flies! If Lenny is not with Alick, where is he? Oh, where is he? He must be found at once—at once! I cannot live or breathe till he is found! She must be made to tell how she lost him!" cried Drusilla, losing all her self-command and starting up in great excitement,—"He must be sought for, Anna! he must be sought for at once!"

"Of course he must; but the search must be commenced with this girl who was the last person with him. Pina, you say you don't know who took the child from you?"

"No, ma'am, I don't—but know his father was at the bottom of it—I know it, and I'll stand to it!"

"Why do you think so?"

"Oh, Anna, Anna, you lose time with all this talk!"

"No, I don't; we must find out from her where and how we are to begin to search. Now, Pina, why do you think Lord Killcrichtoun was concerned in this matter?"

"Lor', ma'am, because it stands to reason as he was. Lenny is his own son, which also they are very fond of each other—Lenny of he, and him of Lenny! And so it was nateral he should want to have him. I'm not saying as it was right or anything like right, but it was so!"

"Oh, Anna, Anna, time flying, and no facts learned yet—only conjectures! Let me talk to her myself. Pina, where were you when you missed little Lenny?" inquired Drusilla, distractedly.

"Oh, ma'am! oh, missus, don't take on so—don't, and I will tell you! He was down on the Strand, a-looking in at a toy-shop—oh, dear! oh, me! oh, poor little Lenny!"

"Oh, for the Lord's sake, stop crying and tell me more! You were before a toy-shop you say?" said Drusilla, in extreme anxiety.

"Yes, ma'am, a-looking in at the windows, at the wooden soldiers, and horses, and ships; and there comes along a man with an organ and a dancing-monkey. And little Lenny turned away from the window to look at the monkey. And a crowd collected. They were mostly children. And little Lenny is fond of children—and so—oh! oh, dear! oh, my heart will break!"

"Compose yourself, and go on, Pina!" said Anna.

"Yes, ma'am. Oh! oh, dear! Yes—well, little Lenny wanted to mix up with them; but they were mostly ragged and dirty street children, and I was afeard of fevers, and fleas, and sich, and so I kept him to myself, so I did. Oh, oh, me! I wish I had always kept him to myself, so I do," sobbed Pina.

"Go on," said Anna.

"And I saw two ill-looking men in the crowd. And indeed I didn't think nothing of it at the time, because ill-looking men ain't no rarity in no city, and that I knew of my own self. And these men, most of their ill-looks

was in their dirty and ragged clothes, and bruised and firey faces. And while I was a-takin' notice of them on the sly, one of 'em says to the other;

"'There—that's the young 'un.'

"And the other says:

"'Which?'

"And the first one stoops and whispers to the other, so I couldn't hear. And then they fell back out of the crowd a little ways, and began to look into the shop windows unconcerned-like. And indeed, indeed, I had no notion then as they had been talking about little Lenny, such wilyuns as they were, though I have thought so since! Oh, Lenny! oh, dear little Lenny! I wish somebody would knock my brains out, so I do! Oh, dear! oh, dear! oh——!"

"Pina, stop howling and go on with this statement!" said Anna, authoritatively, while Drusilla clasped her hands, and listened in an agony of anxiety.

"Well, ma'am, after the men turned away, little Lenny began to tease me for pennies to give to the dancing-monkey—and I gave him all I had, and he ran into the crowd to put them into the hat the monkey was holding out."

"You should not have let him do that," said Anna.

"Ma'am, you know how sudden and self-willed he is! he sprang away from me before I could stop him. And I ran after him to bring him out. But, just at that very moment, there came rushing down the sidewalk, and right through the crowd, a man with his head bare and bloody, followed by a running crowd, all yelling at the top of their voices:

"'Stop thief! stop thief!'

"And they overturned the organ man and his dancing-monkey, and carried off his crowd with them. I ran after them calling for little Lenny, who was swept out of my sight by the rushing stream of people. I ran with all my speed and I called with all my voice, but I got knocked from one side of the walk to the other, and thrown down and run over, and trampled on, and swore at, and —and that was the way I lost little Lenny. I was hunting up and down for him when the policeman found me and fetched me home. Oh, dear! oh, me, that ever I

should live to see the day! Oh, missus! oh, Miss Anna! oh——"

"Now stop. Let us talk calmly for a moment," said Anna, reflectively. "Let me see. Lenny could not have been hurried off by those thief-hunters; because, if he had been, a tender little creature like himself would have been thrown down, run over, and left behind, and you would have found him on the ground more or less injured."

"That was what I was a dreading of every minute, Miss Anna. Oh, little Lenny! dear little Lenny!"

"Therefore," continued Anna, "as he was not so run over and left, he must have been snatched up by some one and carried off under cover of the confusion. The kidnapper probably darted up one of the side streets or alleys, and disappeared with his prey in that way."

"That was what I thought, too, Miss Anna, when I remembered seeing them bad-looking men and hearing what they said. They was a watching of their opportunity to seize little Lenny and run away with him; and in course they must have been set on by his father, who wanted him; else what call would they have to take the child? —they who don't look as if they had overmuch love for children, or for any other creatures, to tell the holy truth; no, nor likewise did they look as if they was able to keep themselves from starving, much less a child; so it stands to reason as they was hired to seize little Lenny by some un who *did* love him, and *was* able to keep him; and who could that have been but his own father?"

"Pina, I think you are probably right in your conjecture, for I cannot even imagine what motive two such men as you describe could possibly have for stealing a child like Lenny. They must have been employed by his father, and if so, they must have been engaged some days ago, and have been on the lookout for the boy ever since."

"Oh, Anna, Anna, do you really think he is with his father? If I thought so, one-half this terrible anxiety would be quieted. Oh, Anna, do you truly think Lenny is with Alick?" cried Drusilla, clasping her hands.

"I have little doubt that Alexander employed these men to get little Lenny. I have little doubt but that, for the sake of gain, they will faithfully perform their part

of the compact. My only wonder is that Alick should have employed such very disreputable instruments."

"Pina, is that all? Do you know no more?" anxiously inquired Drusilla.

"It is all, missus—every bit. I have told you not only all that happened, but all I seed and heard and even thought."

"Now then for action," said the young mother, rising with a new-born resolution and ringing the bell.

The waiter answered it.

"Order a cab for me immediately, and come and let me know when it is at the door," she said.

And when the man went away to do her bidding she turned to Pina and said:

"Stop crying and do as I direct you. Go to my room and bring me here my bonnet, gloves and mantle."

Pina, still sobbing, went to obey.

"And now, Anna, if you wish to accompany me, go and get ready quickly. I have something to do in the meanwhile."

"Where are you going, Drusilla?" inquired Mrs. Hammond, wondering to see the agonized young mother take the direction of affairs with so much firmness.

"I am going to institute a search for little Lenny. I must find him before I sleep. Use your pleasure, Anna dear, in going with me, or staying at home."

"I shall go with you most certainly," said Mrs. Hammond, leaving the room to prepare for her ride.

Meanwhile Drusilla sat down to her writing desk, and wrote off rapidly disjointed paragraphs on several sheets of paper.

Anna returned ready for her drive, and found Drusilla thus occupied.

"What in the world are you doing, my dear?" inquired Mrs. Hammond.

"Preparing slips of paper that may, or may not, be wanted; for no time must be lost. See, here is a telegram to be sent to uncle at Southampton, if necessary. Here are a dozen copies of an advertisement, descriptive of little Lenny's person and dress, and of the circumstances of his disappearance, and the reward offered for his restoration, to be put, if required, into to-morrow's papers. Still I hope

that none of these things need be done. We must drive first to Mivart's where Alexander stops, or did stop, and see if he is still there, and if he has the child in his possession. If we find that Lenny is safe with his father, then it will be all right, for I feel sure that my boy will be amused and happy for a little while, and then he will want to come home to me, and Alick will never be so cruel as to keep him from his mother. But if we do not find him with Alick, then we must sent this telegram immediately to Southampton to summon uncle back to town; and we must have this advertisement inserted in all the papers, and posted all over London; and we must employ the whole detective police force, or as many of it as we can procure, to prosecute the search——It is time the cab were here. I wish it would come," said Drusilla, touching the bell.

"Good Heaven, Drusilla! how you do astonish me! Who would have believed that you—a young and delicate woman, a doting and anxious mother—could have displayed so much coolness and resolution in such an hour of trial and suffering," exclaimed Anna, in genuine admiration.

"Ah, Anna! if experience has disciplined me in anything, it has disciplined me in self-control."

At this moment the door opened, and the waiter appeared and announced:

"Your cab waits, madam."

"Come then," said Drusilla.

And followed by Anna and attended by Pina, she hurried down-stairs.

They entered the cab, gave the order, and were driven rapidly towards Mivart's hotel.

The drive was accomplished in almost perfect silence. Drusilla sat pale and still, suffering inexpressible anguish, yet controlling herself by a mighty effort.

Anna was occupied by her own anxious thoughts. Of course *she* knew the mission to Mivart's in search of Alick to be quite vain, and worse than vain since it involved loss of time where time was of vital importance; yet she dared not enlighten Drusilla by explaining the absence of Alexander, for she feared by doing so to add to the terrible anxiety that was already oppressing the young wife and mother. And, also, Anna suspected that Alexander really

was concerned in the abduction of little Lenny; that he had hired these men to carry him off; and had most probably instructed them to bring him to Mivart's. Therefore, although she knew there was no chance of finding Alexander, she cherished some hope of hearing of little Lenny. The men who abducted him might have carried him there, not knowing of their employer's absence. If so, little Lenny might be recovered before the day was over.

Amid all her grave anxieties, Anna felt some little curiosity upon one point: Drusilla had grown so sensitive and timid in regard to her beloved but truant husband that she had shrunk even from the casual glance of his eye in public; and now she was going to Mivart's in quest of him; after all that had passed, she was voluntarily seeking him; true, it was to find the child; true, also, she could not see her husband; but—would she ask to see Alexander? Could she endure to see him? What were her thoughts and feelings on that subject? Anna would ask.

"Drusilla," she said, "when we reach Mivart's shall you send in your card to Alexander?"

The young mother started. She had been in a deep reverie about the present condition of her child, and had not heard her distinctly.

Anna repeated her question.

"Yes; I shall send in my card," she said.

"And shall you see him?"

"That shall be as he pleases. Here is the card that I have prepared to send in to him," she continued, taking from her gold case a small envelope directed to Lord Killcrichtoun, and drawing from it her card, bearing the name, "MRS. ALEXANDER LYON," and the pencilled lines, "*Only tell me little Lenny is with you and is safe and I will thank and bless you.*" "I shall send that up. He can reply to it by a pencilled line, or a verbal message, or he can come down and see me, as he wills," said Drusilla.

"Drusa, you have thought of everything; you have prepared for every emergency. But maternal love is a great sharpener of the wits, I suppose," said Anna.

"It confers a sixth sense I sometimes think, Anna," she replied.

When they reached the splendid palace in the West End known as Mivart's Hotel, the ladies alighted, and were shown into an elegant reception room, where they sat down.

Drusilla then called a hall waiter, gave him her enveloped card, and directed him to take it at once to Lord Killcrichtoun.

"Lord Killcrichtoun is not in town, madam," replied the man.

"Not in town!" exclaimed Drusilla, disappointment and terror seizing her heart and blanching her face. "I thought he was in town! I saw him last night at the American Embassy. Does he not stop here?"

"Yes, madam; my lord has apartments here, but he left suddenly this morning by the early train for Southampton."

"For Southampton!" echoed Drusilla, in surprise and dismay, and with the vague fear that his journey thither was in some fatal way the occasion of General Lyon's and Dick's sudden departure for that port.

"Yes, madam," answered the imperturbable waiter, "my lord left by the eight o'clock train, taking his servants with him."

"When will he return?"

"Can't possibly say, madam. My lord set no day for his return. But if you will excuse me, I will make so bold as to say I do not think he will be gone long. He took nothing but a small portmanteau with him."

Drusilla reflected a moment and then sealing her envelope, and handing it to the waiter with a crown piece she said:

"Will you be so kind as to send this to his address at Southampton?"

"Why, madam, if you would not mind risking the note, I might send it at a venture to the Dolphin Tavern at Southampton, where it might chance to meet my lord, as that is the house he usually has his letters and papers sent to when down there. But I am not quite certain now about his address, seeing that he never left any orders this time where to send his letters. But if this is not very valuable you might run the risk of sending it to the Dolphin."

"I thank you, send it immediately to the Dolphin. It is not of itself of any worth, except as a message to Lord Killcrichtoun. If it does not find him it might as well be lost," said Drusilla, rising to go.

But Anna had also something to say to the waiter. Laying her hand upon Drusilla's arm, she pressed her back into her seat, and then turning to the man, she inquired:

"Has any one beside ourselves been here to inquire for Lord Killcrichtoun?"

"Yes, madam, many persons."

"Gentlemen or ladies?"

"No ladies, madam. Three gentlemen were in to see him very early this morning, before he went away."

"Ah, but I mean since he went away."

"Oh, yes, madam, quite a number."

"Again, gentlemen or ladies?"

"Neither one nor the other, madam; *men*."

"Men! Ah! what sort of men?"

"Common roughs, madam."

"Yes! yes! did any of these men have a child with them?"

"Beg pardon, madam?"

"I ask you if either of these rough-looking men had a child with him a fair-haired, blue-eyed little boy, of about two years old."

"No, madam, certainly not."

"You are sure?"

"Perfectly sure, madam."

"Well, waiter, attend to me. We have lost a child—and have some reason to suppose that the child was brought to this house this afternoon."

"It has not, madam, I can assure you."

"We have cause to believe, then, that he will be brought here—Drusilla, dear, give me one of your cards and one of these advertisements—Now here, waiter, is a description of the child; and here is our address. If such a child should be brought here, I desire that you will detain him, and those who bring him, and send for us. Do this and you shall be richly rewarded."

"I will do it, ma'am, if the little boy should be brought here," said the man.

And then, as time was precious, Drusilla and Anna arose and re-entered their cab.

"Where now, Drusilla?" inquired Anna, as they seated themselves.

Instead of answering her cousin immediately, Drusilla beckoned the cabman to approach, and said:

"Drive to the nearest Telegraph Office, and drive fast"

The man touched his hat, shut the door, mounted his box and started his horses.

Then Drusilla turned to her cousin and explained:

"My dear Alick may, or may not have employed those men to carry off little Lenny. If he has done so, he could not have expected them to do his errand to-day, else certainly he would not have left town with the chance of leaving the child in such hands. In that view of the case I left my card with the penciled lines for the waiter to send to him, to let him know that Lenny is in the hands of his agents, supposing that they *are* his, and in any case to let him know the child is missing."

"Oh, Drusilla! how clearly you speak, and yet how wretchedly you look! Heaven help you, poor, young mother!" said Mrs. Hammond, as the tears rushed to her eyes.

"Oh, Anna! don't, don't, dear! don't pity me! don't say anything to weaken me! I have need of all my strength!" cried Drusilla, through her white and quivering lips.

Anna, with heaving bosom and overflowing eyes, turned her head away from her and looked out of the window.

"You asked me just now where we were going next. You heard me tell the cabman to drive to the Telegraph Office. I must send off two telegrams to Southampton. I cannot wait the slow motions of the mails. One I shall send to Alick, directed at a venture to the 'Dolphin.' The other I must send to uncle; but you must tell me where to direct that, as I do not know his address," said Drusilla.

"Dick told me, in any sudden emergency that might require his or grandpa's presence, to direct to them at the 'International,'" replied Anna.

"Very well; we will telegraph there."

At this moment the cab stopped before the Telegraph Office.

The office of course was full of people, and Anna and Drusilla had to wait their turn.

While standing at the counter, Drusilla borrowed pen, ink and paper from one of the clerks, and wrote her two messages. The first, addressed to her husband, ran thus:

"*Little Lenny was stolen from his nurse, by two men, this afternoon, in the Strand, and has not yet been recovered.* DRUSILLA."

She submitted this to the examination of Anna, saying:

"That is quite enough and not too much to send. If he is concerned in the abduction, he will hasten at once to London to take the child from the dangerous hands he is in. If he is not so, still I think he will hurry hither to help in the search."

"You reason rightly, dear," said Anna.

Drusilla then wrote a second message, to be sent to General Lyon. It was couched in these terms:

"*Little Lenny is missing since this afternoon. Come to London by the first train. If in the interim you have time to do so, seek Alexander at the Dolphin and tell him.*"

This also she showed to Anna, saying:

"You see I had to modify my message since learning that Alexander was also in Southampton; and so also I had to destroy the slip I wrote at the Morley House and prepare this. Now I see it is my turn to be served," she said, taking her two messages and carrying them to the operator. She paid for them and then inquired!

"How soon will these go?"

"This instant, mum," answered the bothered operator, so brusquely that Drusilla did not venture to ask another question, but merely left her address and a request that if an answer came to either of her telegrams it might be forwarded immediately.

"Now, my dear, what next?" inquired Anna, as they re-entered their carriage.

"To the 'Times' office, and from there to all the newspaper offices in turn. It may not be really necessary to advertise; and I hope that it is not; but still I must lose no time and miss no chance," said Drusilla.

And having given her order to the cabman, she was driven rapidly to the head-quarters of the great thunderer.

She got out and left her advertisement. And then returning to her carriage, ordered it to the office of the "Post."

And so in succession she visited the offices of the "Chronicle," "Express," "Dispatch," "Leader," "News," "Bulletin," and, in short, of every daily paper in London.

In each of the offices she also, in addition to giving in her advertisement for the paper, ordered posters of the lost child to be printed, and engaged bill-stickers to paste them up.

Next she drove to the lodgings of the Seymour family, to tell the colonel of the loss of little Lenny, and to ask him to assist her in the search for the child.

But here she was informed that Colonel Seymour and the ladies were gone to the theater; but that the servants did not know what particular theater.

So Drusilla wrote a note and left it for the colonel.

It was now nine o'clock, and quite dark; and having done all she could possibly do towards the recovery of her child, she ordered the cabman to drive back to the hotel, to meet the horrors of her lonely night and forced inaction.

And, oh! the awful sense of bereavement, of loneliness, of vacancy, in entering again her apartments, in which little Lenny was no longer to be found! The heart-rending pang of terror in conjecturing where he might be!

While she had been busily, actively engaged in taking measures for his recovery, her thoughts had been somewhat distracted from concentrating themselves upon his present condition.

But now, when she had done all that she could possibly do towards finding him, now that she had come home to the old familiar rooms, made desolate by his loss, and was obliged to abide in inactivity within them,—now that she missed him everywhere and every moment,—the reaction from courage to despair was so sudden and overwhelming that her very brain reeled, her reason for the moment seemed imperiled. With a half-stifled cry, she sank upon her chair, muttering with gasping breath:

"It is not possible! it cannot be! Lenny gone, and

not know where he is! WAKE ME! WAKE ME! I have the nightmare!"

Anna sprang to her side, and put her arms around her saying:

"Drusilla, Drusilla! my darling, courageous girl! collect your powers—control yourself!"

"Is it TRUE, Anna? Oh, say it is not—not true! Lenny is NOT LOST!" she exclaimed, wildly gazing into Anna's eyes.

"We hope that he is safe wherever he is," said Anna wishingly.

"Wherever he is! Oh, my Heaven, yes, it is so! He is lost, and we do not know where to find him!" she exclaimed, distractedly starting up and walking the floor, and wringing and twisting her hands. "Where is he? where is he to-night? Oh, in all this great crowded city, where is my little child—my poor, little two-year old child, who cannot help himself? He is frightened to death wherever he is—I know it! He is calling for me, he is crying for me, at this very moment! Oh, my Lenny, my Lenny! I would go to you through fire if I knew where to find you in this great Babylon! I would, my little one, I would! But I do not know where in this wilderness to look for you to-night, and you must cry for me in vain, my little child, you must! Oh, what a horrible night! I cannot, I cannot live through it! I cannot breathe in this house! I must go out and look for him again! I must! I must!"

Her head was thrown back, her arms raised, and her hands clasped upon her throbbing temples, and she reeled as she walked to and fro in the room.

Anna, who had kept near her, seeing her about to fall, caught her and made her sit down, while she said:

"Drusa, dearest, be reasonable! be yourself!"

"I must go out and look for my little child! I must, Anna! I must! I cannot live through this horrible night if I stay in this house!" she cried.

"Drusa, consider! you can do no good by going out to-night, but much harm. You could not find little Lenny, but you would lose yourself. You have already done all that you possibly could do for his recovery. Having done so, leave the result to Heaven."

"Oh, if we could only know where he is!"

"We shall find out to-morrow, no doubt. The advertisements will be read; the posters will be seen; the large reward offered will stimulate inquiry; the detective police will be on the alert; and, in, all human probability, before this time to-morrow little Lenny will be in your arms! and grandpa, and Dick, and who knows but Alick, too, will all be here rejoicing with you in your child's restoration! Drusilla, this cloud may have a silver lining: this transient trial may bring about a great happiness,' said Anna, speaking with perhaps more cheerful confi dence than she really felt.

"Heaven grant it! Oh, Heaven in its mercy grant it! But till then! But to-night! Oh, how shall I live through this horrible night! How will my little child endure it? my tender little child, who was never away from me before! And, oh, in what wretchedness he may be! in what terror! in what danger! crying for his mother to come and take him, and she knows not where to find him!"

"Drusilla! Drusilla! use your own excellent judgment. Is it likely at all that the child should be in danger to-night, or even in terror? Children live and thrive in the lowest haunts of London. The men who stole him for his father will of course take the best possible care of him in order to deliver him in the best condition and to get their money; so he will be in no danger; and as for his being in terror, little Lenny is a 'game boy,' afraid of nothing on earth, neither of 'thunder nor horses,' as he once told me, much less of men; and as to crying for you, he is probably by this time fast asleep, and well watched, for his abductors know that he is a treasure that will bring money to their ragged pockets."

"Oh, if I could think so!—oh, if I could think so. Oh, if I could only know where he is—know where I might lay my hand on him to-night, or to-morrow, I might be at something like peace; but oh, Anna, it is distracting, it is maddening to feel that in all this huge, crowded city I do not know where he is!"

"Drusilla," said Anna, laying her hand upon the young mother's shoulder, looking in her eyes, speaking sweetly and solemnly, and appealing to the deepest feelings of the

young Christian's soul. "Drusilla, if *we* do not know where little Lenny is to-night, *his Heavenly Father does.* He sees him, watches over him, protects him. What would *your* knowledge of his whereabouts, or *your* power to protect him, be to that of his Heavenly Father, whose eyes are over all his works, who is as all-merciful as he is all-mighty. Take this faith home to your heart and let it comfort you."

"Oh, Anna, that does comfort me. To think that the Lord knows where he is, though I do not; the *Lord* can take care of him, though I cannot. Oh, I thought no one but the thieves could know where little Lenny is to-night; but behold the Lord knows! And I feared that I could do nothing more for him to-night; but behold I can pray to the Lord for him. I will spend the night in praying for him!" said the bereaved mother, growing somewhat more composed.

But there was no going to bed in the ladies' apartments that night.

As they had not broken their fast since morning, Anna ordered tea to be served in the drawing-room. Consumed by the feverish thirst brought on by mental distress, they drank some tea, but would eat nothing.

When the service was removed, both went to Anna's room, for Drusilla did not dare to trust herself within her own desolated chamber, and they changed their carriage dresses for loose wrappers, and they spent the night in vigil and in prayer.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ALEXANDER'S JEALOUSY.

Ten thousand fears
Invented wild, ten thousand frantic views
Of horrid rivals, hanging on the charms,
For which he melts in fondness, eat him up
With fervent anguish and consuming rage.—THOMPSON.

We must return to the hour when Alexander threw himself into his cab and dashed back to his hotel. He did not go to bed, you may be sure. He had a countryman and an acquaintance in the same house, who was no other than our young friend, Francis Tredegar.

Francis occupied the singular position of being on friendly terms with both Alick and Drusilla, without knowing or even suspecting the relation that these two bore to each other; and, moreover, as he never happened to mention the name of Lord Killcrichtoun to Mrs. Lyon, or that of Mrs. Lyon to Lord Killcrichtoun, neither one of these was aware of his acquaintance with the other.

Mr. Tredegar had been at the Ambassadress' ball, and had returned to his hotel about the same hour that Alexander got back there.

So Alexander, instead of going directly to his own apartments, went first to Mr. Tredegar's room and rapped.

"Who's there?" cried a voice from within.

"It is I. Have you retired yet?"

"No. Come in."

Alick entered and found his friend, divested of his coat and vest and preparing for bed.

"Put on your clothes again, Francis, you must do something for me before you sleep," said Alexander, walking towards the dressing-table at which Mr. Tredegar stood, with his back to his visitor.

"Good gracious, Alick, my dear fellow, what on earth can you want me to do for you at four o'clock in the morning, after having made a night of it at the ball?" laughed Francis Tredegar, turning around in much surprise; but his surprise became consternation as he gazed on the haggard features and ghastly complexion of his visitor. "Merciful Heaven, Alick!" he exclaimed, "what is the matter? What on earth has happened to you?"

"I have been insulted, outraged, beyond all endurance. And I want you to be the bearer of a challenge from me!" grimly replied Alexander.

"A challenge, Alick! In the name of reason, are you mad?"

"I wish I were! Perhaps I am! But in a few words, Tredegar, if I convince you that I have been wronged to a degree unendurable by an honorable man, will you then become the bearer of my challenge to the base caitiff who has so foully abused me?"

"Why certainly I will, Alick. In any just cause I will stand by you to the very death! But is it really as bad as you think?"

"'As bad as I think?' Listen."

"Sit down, Alick, and tell me all about it," said Tredegar, rolling towards his visitor a comfortable arm-chair.

Alick dropped into the offered seat.

Tredegar perched himself on the corner of the dressing-table.

"I will put a case and let you judge for yourself. Suppose that you were devoted to a beautiful, amiable and accomplished woman, who was at least equally devoted to yourself——"

"Heavens! If I could suppose that I should be in paradise!"

"No levity, if you please, Francis."

"Beg pardon. I will be as grave as a rejected lover, or —as an *accepted* one!"

"Suppose this mutual devotion had grown up with you from infancy to maturity; and that it was consecrated by the most sacred bonds and pledges."

"Meaning, poetically speaking, 'bonds of matrimony' and 'pledges of affection'—otherwise, practically prosing, wife and children."

"No, not exactly; but, to continue: Suppose this mutual devotion to have lived on in love, and trust, and joy, and peace until certain untoward circumstances—your own madness, to wit:—disturbed the harmony of your relations; yet still in all the discord this mutual love lived on; lived on, only deepened and strengthened by separation and suffering,—lived on until just at the time you were beginning to dream of reconciliation and reunion with your first love—your only love, your life's love—a base villain steps in between you, and, favored by fortune and by position, dazzles the mind and steals the heart of your beloved!"

"And is that suppository case your own, Alick?"

"Yes, it is. What would you do if it were yours?"

"I'd let him have her! I'd give 'em my blessing, and let 'em go! But then I'm not you, Alick; if you feel inclined to call the fellow out and giving him a chance to settle your prior claims by blowing out your heated brains, why that's *your* affair!"

"And *you* will have nothing to do with it?"

"I did not say that, Alick; quite the contrary! You

have been wronged, and I will see you righted if I can—and righted in your own way too!"

"Then you will take my challenge?"

"With all my heart. To whom am I to take it?"

"To Prince Ernest of Hohenlinden. May the demon fly away with him!"

"To Prince Ernest of Hohenlinden, *Whew!*"

"What's the matter?"

"He's a dead shot—the deadliest shot on this side the ocean!"

"That is not saying much for him! I'm a second or third rate marksman on the other side of the ocean. So that makes us about equal. Will you come to my room now, Tredegar? I wish to write my despatch and send it off at once. No time should be lost in these affairs."

"What! are you in such hot haste to meet your foe? Are your feet so 'swift to shed blood?' Will you then rush, as our grand Halleck has it—

'To death as to a festival?'

Alick, Alick! I am sorry for you!"

"Spare your compassion and come to my room," said Alexander, rising and leading the way through the halls and corridors that led to his own sumptuous suite of apartments.

Arrived there, Alexander made Francis Tredegar sit down, while he placed himself at his writing-desk and penned his challenge to the prince.

"I shall not have far to seek, at any rate," said Mr. Tredegar, as he received the note, "for Prince Ernest has apartments on this very floor."

"I knew of course that he was stopping here," said Alexander.

"And now then, if it is a discreet question, who is the fair lady for whose sake two such gallant knights are to do battle?" inquired Tredegar, poising the paper on his finger.

"But it is *not* a fair question, Tredegar. The name of the lady should never be mentioned in such matters. I cannot utter it even to you, dear Francis," said Alick gravely.

"All right. But see here! It is never that beautiful young widow, Mrs. Lyon, who made such a sensation as the belle of the ball last night?"

"Bosh!" exclaimed Alexander, growing deadly white, and jerking himself around in apparent impatience, but with a real desire to conceal his emotion—"Bosh, I say! It is no widow for whose sake I wish to meet him. There is not a widow alive in whom I feel the slightest interest!"

"Well, then, I think you are all at sea about the prince. He thinks of no other woman in the world but the beautiful widow. His devotion to her was the general topic of conversation last night."

"And I tell you that you are all 'at sea,' as you call it, my dear Francis. Come! you have taken my word for the justice of my cause, now take my challenge to my foe."

"Well, that is soon done, unless he has gone to bed."

"That he has not I will venture to predict. He is waiting my challenge."

"As eager for the fray as yourself, eh?"

"Quite."

"But see here, Alick! I promised to stand by you in this cause, and I will do it; but though I bear your challenge, I shall try to settle this affair amicably."

"'Amicably?' It can never——"

"Oh, I know it would be quite useless to argue with you, but Prince Ernest may be more amenable to reason, more open to conviction."

"Will you go?"

"Well, yes, I am going," said Tredegar, leaving the room.

As soon as he was alone Alexander looked at the clock. It wanted a quarter to five.

In passing before his dressing-table, his eye caught the reflection of his ghastly face in the glass.

"Good heavens!" he said, "I look like a ghost already. I shall not look more pallid after that fellow has killed me—if he does kill me—than I do now; and that chance of death reminds me that I must settle up my worldly affairs as quickly as I can."

So saying, he sat down to his writing table, took a sheet of foolscap and a coarse pen, and began to write. He wrote a few lines in an "engrossing" hand, and then

stopped, with a troubled brow, to reflect. Thus writing and reflecting, he completed the work he was on in about half an hour.

Then he took note paper and another pen and wrote a letter, which he placed in an envelope, sealed and directed.

Finally he sat back in his chair, and fell into deep thought.

When Mr. Tredegar had been gone an hour, he returned and re-entered the room.

"Well?" exclaimed Alick, looking up.

"Well, it is settled," said Tredegar, dropping into a chair near his friend. "I found Prince Ernest even more resolutely bent upon the meeting than you are. He considers himself the insulted party. When I requested to see him, I was admitted at once to his chamber, where I found him tearing up and down the floor in his sacred shirt. If my errand had not been so grave, I could have laughed. He made no sort of apology for his extreme déshabille, but seemed to know my errand. I handed him your challenge. He then began to rave about the insult that had been offered him, and the 'grawnd satees-fac-shee-on,' as he called it, that he would take. He introduced me to his friend, Major Ernest Zollenhoffar, or some such barbaric name, and he told me to settle the preliminaries of the meeting with him. Then he dismissed us to an adjoining room."

"And you settled them?"

"Yes; subject, of course, to the approval of the principals. Prince Ernest approves. It is now for you to pass judgment."

"It is not likely that I shall object. Let me hear them."

Francis Tredegar took from his breast pocket a folded paper, opened it, and partly read from it and partly said:

"As it is not possible that this meeting should take place on English soil, it is arranged that the parties go by the next train to Southampton, take the steamer to Jersey and proceed to the open country between St. Aubins and St. Héléir. The exact spot of the duel to be settled afterward. The weapons are to be pistols. The distance ten paces. The signals—One—Two—Three. At the last word—FIRE!"

"That will do. We must go by the eight o'clock train, which is the next. Let me see ;—it is now a quarter past five. We must leave this house by seven, in order to make sure of our train. Thus we have but an hour and three-quarters for preparation," said Alexander.

"But I have not read you all the articles yet. There is something about surgeons and attendants——"

"Let all that go. It is of minor importance," said Alexander, laying his hand upon the cord of the bell that communicated with his valet's room.

He rang loudly and repeatedly. And presently the man made his appearance, half asleep and half dressed.

"Simms," said his master, "pack my portmanteau with a change of clothes and small dressing-case. We go to Southampton by the eight o'clock train."

The man stared a little at this unexpected order, but, being a well trained servant, suppressed his surprise and hastened to obey his orders.

Alexander examined his pistol-case, and, seeing that all was right, proceeded to prepare himself for his sudden journey.

Francis Tredegar repaired to his own chamber for the same purpose.

Half an hour passed in this manner, and then Mr. Tredegar returned, traveling-bag in hand.

He found Alexander again at his writing desk.

"Come here, Francis, my dear boy ; I want you to witness the signing of my will," said Alexander, looking around.

"You will require two witnesses," observed Francis Tredegar, gravely, as he approached the table.

"Yes, I know! Here, Simms."

The valet came up.

In the presence of his friend and his servant, Alexander signed his will. And then Francis Tredegar and John Simms signed as witnesses.

"Now, Tredegar, I have named you and another one, executors of this will. But I wish you to take charge of it in case anything should happen to me."

"Oh, bosh!" said Tredegar, gaily, yet with a tremulous tone,—"these affairs seldom end fatally."

But he took the will and put it carefully in his breast pocket.

"It is nearly seven o'clock now. I wonder if we could get some coffee. Go down, Simms, and see, and have it brought to this room," said Alexander.

The servant went on this errand.

The master turned again to his friend.

"Here, Francis," he said, gravely, as he handed the letter he had written; "I wish you, in case of my death, to deliver this letter to its address."

"Oh, nonsense. There is going to be nothing so solemn. You may be wounded slightly, and as you are a good marksman you may wound Prince Ernest seriously. That will be all," said Mr. Tredegar. But his voice trembled as he spoke, and his hand shook as he took charge of the letter.

"Why, good Heaven, Alick! this is directed to Mrs. Alexander Lyon, Morley House, Trafalgar Square," said Tredegar, in unbounded astonishment, as he read the address.

"Yes, that is what she *calls* herself," said Alexander, grimly.

"And so it is the lovely widow, after all, who is the cause of this hostile meeting?"

"I told you that no widow had anything to do with it. She is not a widow, Tredegar."

"Not a widow! and just now you hinted that she was not Mrs. Lyon. Who is she, then, Alick?"

"She is Lady Killcrichtoun—she is my wife, Tredegar."

"Good Heavens, Alick!—Here!—Here is my hand! I go with you now heart and soul! I am not bloodthirsty, and I want no man's life; but I do hope you will cripple that fellow for the rest of his days!" fervently exclaimed Francis Tredegar, clasping his hand into Alexander's palm.

"I did not wish—I did not mean to mention her dear name in this connection; circumstances and necessity have forced it from me. Treat it as a sacred confidence, Tredegar."

"By my soul I will!"

"And listen to this: the fault, the folly, the madness belong to *me* and to that man. *She* is blameless!—yes,

blameless as any holy angel. I swear it by all my hopes of Heaven!"

The entrance of the waiter with a tray put an end to the conversation for the time being.

The friends took each a cup of coffee, a muffin, and a chop, and then went down-stairs and entered the cab that was already packed for their journey.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE DUEL.

Blood! he will have blood!—SHAKESPEARE.

As Alexander and his party entered the fly that was to take them to the station, they observed the crested coach and liveried servants of Prince Ernest coming around the next corner.

"Ah!" said Alexander. "We shall be at the station before them. I am glad of it. Our advance will enable us to take a whole carriage and avoid the possibility of going down in their company."

"But it is not to be presumed but that Prince Ernest will do the same thing—will engage a whole carriage for himself and *suite*," answered Tredegar.

"*If he can.* But whole carriages are not always to be had, at the last moment before starting There may chance to be one, and that I will secure."

They were bowling rapidly along the streets as Alexander spoke.

In due time they reached the crowded station.

"It is a notable blessing that we are not encumbered with baggage," said Mr. Tredegar, as they pressed their way to the first-class ticket window.

"Yes; what little we have can be taken in the carriage with us," replied Alexander.

High over the heads of the crowd that was before them, Francis Tredegar held his ten-pound note, and high also over their voices he spoke:

"We want a whole first-class carriage, if you please."

The note was taken.

"How far?" inquired the agent.

"Through," answered Francis.

The tickets were handed him.

Francis clutched them and said:

"Come! we must hurry all the same in order to secure ourselves."

As they pressed outward through the crowd, they saw a servant in the livery of Prince Ernest pressing inward towards the ticket office. And before they had quite worked their way through they heard the man call for a whole first-class carriage.

"You see he is after the same thing. Let us hurry to the train. First come first served, you know. And there may be but one," remarked Alick.

They pressed forward to the railway platform; found a guard and showed him their tickets and—a crown piece to hurry his movements.

Guard touched his hat, opened a door and popped our party into a roomy carriage with eight comfortable seats.

"The only wholly vacant one on the train, sir, I can assure you," said the guard, pocketing his crown piece, touching his hat and closing the door.

"Ah!" whispered Alexander, rubbing his hands, "I told you so." It was such a satisfaction for him to think he had been beforehand with the unlucky Austrian, who would therefore be compelled to distribute himself and his suite promiscuously through the carriages.

He had no idea that another carriage would be attached to the train especially to accommodate Prince Ernest and his suite. Yet such was the case.

The train started It was the express, and it went on at a tremendous rate. Houses, streets, suburbs, fields, woods, towns flew behind it.

How did our travelers pass the two or three hours of their journey? They were going down by the express, for the avowed purpose of engaging in a mortal combat. It might be supposed that their time would be spent in sorely troubled thought. Will it be believed that it was passed in—sleep?

Yet so it was. Human nature must sleep. The condemned criminal sleeps the night before his execution; the victim on the rack has been known to sleep in the intervals

between each turn of the screw; the agonized mother drops asleep in the interims of her travail.

Alexander was going to kill or to be killed; Francis Tredegar was going down to help him meet either fate. Yet these by no means hardened sinners, really slept.

Worn out by want of rest, and affected by the swift motion of the train, they slept soundly—waking up only once in a while, when the train would stop at some unusually noisy way station.

Doubtless on these wakings both would realize with a pang of recollection the horror of the business upon which they were traveling. But if so neither gave a sign. If either spoke it would be to make some commonplace remark, as:

"*Ah-yah!* I do believe I have been asleep! This dancing until four o'clock in the morning does use a fellow up confoundedly," from Francis Tredegar; or:

"Quite a pretty little village this where we are stopping now," from Alexander.

But not one word of the grave matter that occupied both minds.

And as soon as the train started they would cease talking, and soon after, fall asleep again, and sleep until the next stoppage at the next noisy station.

Thus the hours passed swiftly.

At length they were waked up by a very unusual bustle, and found themselves at a very unusually large station.

"This is a considerable town. I wonder what it is," said Francis Tredegar, yawning and looking out of the window.

"It is Southampton and we are at our journey's end," answered Alexander.

"Indeed! We have run down very soon."

"Not so very soon either. We slept all the way and know little of the flight of time. It wants but twenty minutes to eleven o'clock, and we have but just time to catch the boat. Where is the guard? I wish he would come and open the door and let us out. It is a confounded nuisance, this locking the carriage-doors on the outside, keeping one in a sort of flying prison," grumbled Alexan-

der, looking from the window up and down the platform for the guard.

"It is for one's safety," said Francis Tredegar.

"Oh, bosh! as if I hadn't any right to risk my own life! It is not so precious to any one, I take it."

"Well, but granting that, *other* lives may be precious to *other* people, and this rule is made for the safety of all."

As Francis Tredegar spoke the guard came up and unlocked the door, and released the prisoners.

"A quarter to eleven! Come, Francis, hurry—we have not a moment to lose if we would catch the boat," exclaimed Alexander, flying down the platform and beckoning a cab from the stand.

Francis Tredegar and Alick's valet hurried after him.

"To the St. Aubins steamboat, as fast as you can go," was the order Alexander gave to the cabman, who stood hat in hand holding the door open.

The man closed the door upon the impatient party, mounted his seat, and started his horses.

They were driven rapidly down to the wharf, where the St. Aubins steamer lay getting up her steam. They got out, paid the cab, and passed on into the boat.

"Five minutes to eleven—we have just saved ourselves. But that dastard has not made his appearance yet! Is it possible that he will back out at the last moment? If he does, I will post him for a coward all over Europe!" muttered Alexander, frowning.

"There he comes now!" exclaimed Francis, as a carriage rattled rapidly down towards the boat.

And there he was, sure enough. It was not likely that the excitable Austrian was going to lag behind on such an adventure as this.

Prince Ernest and his suite stepped upon deck just one minute and a half before the gang-plank was withdrawn, the signal-gun fired, and the steamer started.

In passing on the deck, the adversaries met face to face. Each raised his hat with a stiff bow and passed on—Prince Ernest and his suite to the forward end of the boat, Alexander and his party to the aft. And they took good care not to meet again during the voyage.

They had a fair day for their foul deed. The sky was

unusually clear, the air calm, and the sea smooth. The steamer ran at the rate of ten knots an hour.

Alexander and his party sat at the stern looking out at sea, and reading or pretending to read the morning papers served around by a newsboy who had the run of the boat.

The boat was certainly not crowded. In fact there very few passengers on board. And among them Alexander and his party saw not a face they knew except those of Prince Ernest and his second.

At two o'clock lunch was served in the saloon.

"Will you come down? we have had but a slight breakfast," pleaded Tredegar.

"I cannot sit at the same table with a man I am about to fight and perhaps to kill," muttered Alexander.

"Nor would he sit at the same table with you, it is to be presumed. But there are probably several tables in the saloon. There goes Prince Ernest! his fire-eating propensities do not take away his appetite for milder food it seems. Let him select his table and then let us go down and take some other," suggested Tredegar.

Alexander assented. And in a few minutes they descended to the saloon and took seats at a table as far as possible from that occupied by Prince Ernest.

The luncheon was a liberal one, as good as a dinner—with soup, fish, fowl, roast and boiled joints, pastry, cheese, and fruits. The wines were good and cheap, various and abundant.

Again, will it be credited, Alexander, firmly believing that within a few hours he must kill or be killed, still ate and drank freely at this lunch. And Tredegar followed his example. Perhaps they did it that the sated stomach might soothe the brain. At any rate when they rose from the table, they went down to the lower deck to a spot set apart and sacred to smoking, and there they smoked out several cigars. After that they went to the cabin, turned into their respective berths, and went to sleep and slept until the ringing of the dinner-bell aroused them.

They arranged their toilettes and went into the saloon. And again, they sought seats as far as possible from the table occupied by Prince Ernest.

It might have been the invigorating effects of the sea-air upon our party; but they certainly sat down and made as good a dinner at seven o'clock as if they had had no luncheon at two. After sitting an hour over their wine, they finished with each a cup of coffee, and then went up on deck.

The sun had set, but the western horizon and the sea were still suffused with his lingering crimson lights. A few stars were coming out.

Alexander and Francis Tredegar sat down in the after part of the boat, and entered into conversation, talking of anything rather than of the approaching duel.

"What time shall we reach St. Aubins do you think?" inquired Alick.

"I have never been on this route before, so I cannot tell you of my own knowledge. From what I have been able to pick up from observations dropped by those that are more familiar with the voyage, I judge we shall be in port somewhere about midnight."

"So late in the night? that will be very inconvenient."

"Yes; but unless we could have arrived before sunset, which was clearly impossible, we could have done nothing more to-day. We must stay at the best hotel to-night, and get our little affair quietly over in the morning."

"The sooner the better," muttered Alexander.

The night was beautiful. The waters of the Channel, often so troubled, were calm as those of a placid lake. The heavens were of that deep transparent purple-black that only summer skies over summer seas ever show. Brighter than diamonds the stars shone down, creating the darkly-brilliant light so much more beautiful than moonbeams. The night was holy. How could thoughts of sin, feelings of revenge, purposes of destruction live in the soul of any man gazing out upon the divine beauty of the sky and sea?

Ah, but Alexander was morally and spiritually ill and insane. He could scarcely be said to belong to the natural world. His spirit seemed already steeped to the lips in that sea of blood seen by the poet-prophet of Italy in his vision of Hell.

How shall he be cured and saved?

And yet he was not unconscious, although he was unimpressed by the beauty of the night.

The deck was almost solitary; the passengers had gone below and turned in, many of them suffering more or less from the effects of sea-sickness; for the boat rolled a little, as small steamboats will roll even on the smoothest seas. No one was left on deck except the man at the wheel, the officers of the watch, and Alexander Lyon and Francis Tredegar.

Francis sauntered up and down the starboard gangway, smoking his cigar, which, at this hour and under these circumstances, was admissible, and meditating most probably on the "coming events" that now "cast their shadows before."

Francis had no such deep stake in the event as had Alexander, for his life was not to be risked, yet not the less was his spirit darkened within him. He, too, saw the star-spangled firmament above and the smooth sea below, reflecting it as a mirror; but he could not enjoy the vision as once he might have. The crime, the folly of which he had been tempted to become a participant was not yet consummated, but yet he felt that some portion of his own soul was already dead, or paralyzed so that he could not feel the heavenly influence of the scene around him. How should he?

Alexander stood leaning over the bulwarks of the boat, gazing moodily out to sea. I said he was not unconscious of the divine beauty of the night, although he was untouched by it. He saw the glory of the firmament, but as something afar off, which could not reach him, and which he could not reach; but he remembered also that in happier times his spirit was touched, drawn out, elevated, by this heavenly influence. Why could it not affect him now? Why was the divine loveliness beaming down upon this natural world, so silent, cold and still, for him? Why was the living spirit of the night but a dead body for him?

Alas! he knew and felt why. He was a man who had ruined his natural life, and all but ruined his immortal spirit. He had sped too fast and too far on the downward road to perdition to stop himself now. He was like one who, running rapidly down hill, has gained such

an impetus that he cannot stop, though he knows that he rushes to death and hell. Alexander knew and felt that dueling was unjustifiable under any circumstances—that it was a tremendous crime—a doubly damnable crime, since it involved at once murder and suicide of body and of soul—perhaps the very worst of crimes; and yet he was bent upon committing it, even though, in doing so, he should lose both body and soul.

The night seemed endless, and the sea boundless, to this sick spirit; yet, just as the watch sounded eight bells and midnight, the boat entered the picturesque harbor of St. Aubins, and soon after landed at the wharf.

There was something more than picturesque, there was something mysterious and even spiritual in the aspect of this singular little maritime town, as seen for the first time in the starlight midnight, overshadowed by its background of Noirmont Heights, and reflected with its few gleaming lights in the still waters of its quiet little harbor—St. Aubins! it is a place for a tired spirit to stop and rest in.

The hour was not yet so late but that some of the hotels were open, especially as they were expecting the arrival of the boat.

Our passengers landed. Some few carriages were waiting, probably by appointment. Prince Ernest and his suite entered one of these and drove off.

Alexander, accompanied by Francis Tredegar, and followed by his servant bearing the carpet bags, walked dreamily up into the town, and took the direction pointed out to him towards the St. Aubins' hotel.

In fact, all his life now seemed something unreal, visionary, delirious as a fevered dream.

Arrived at the hotel, they first saw the empty carriage of Prince Ernest turning away from the door, and they knew as a certainty what they had before taken for granted—that their adversaries were stopping at the same house, which was far the best in the place.

They took a suite of rooms, including a private parlor and two bed-chambers.

"We will have a bit of supper up here and then to work," said Francis Tredegar, touching the bell. Francis was now the only active agent in the enterprise.

The waiter answered his summons.

"Supper immediately. Anything in the world that you have handiest, with a bottle of good sherry," was Mr. Tredegar's orders.

The waiter disappeared and reappeared several times with great rapidity, in course of which evolution he spread the table with a white cloth, and with crockery ware, cutlery and glass, and loaded it with cold ham, roast fowl, and a salad, together with the bottle of wine that had been bespoken.

Alexander and Francis sat down and ate and drank as other travelers might who had no murder on their mind. They spoke no word of the impending duel.

When supper was over and the cloth removed, Francis Tredegar turned to his principal and said:

"Now you will wish to feel well and strong to-morrow morning. You have lost a great deal of rest lately, and will require all the sleep that you can get to restore you. So you had better go to bed at once, and lie there till I call you. I will be sure to call you two hours before the time that shall be fixed for the meeting."

"And you, Francis? Will you not take some rest?"

"No, it is not so necessary for me. I must meet Zollenhoffar by appointment to settle the last—the final arrangements—such as could not possibly be settled before our arrival here."

"Well, you will call me in time?"

"Certainly."

Alexander retired to his chamber, and Francis Tredegar went out to keep his appointment on what might be called neutral ground—in a room, namely, far removed from the quarters of the principal belligerents, and which the seconds had engaged for the purpose of settling the final preliminaries to the hostile meeting.

The night watch of the hotel could have told, and afterwards did tell, how these two men had shut themselves up together in a private room, where they remained from one o'clock, till half past two, when they came out together locked the door, took the key with them, left the house, and bent their steps towards the gloomy heights of Noirmont that lay behind the town; and how about four

o'clock they returned, and separated, each going to his own apartment.

Certainly at about a quarter past four Mr. Tredegar entered Alexander's chamber, where he found his principal tossing about on the bed in a feverish and impatient manner.

"Have you slept?" inquired Francis.

"Slept? How could I? Is it time to rise?"

"Yes."

"I am very glad of it," exclaimed Alexander, jumping out of bed.

"You have rather more than two hours before you, if you have any last preparations to make," said Francis, gravely.

"I have nothing to do but shave, wash and dress."

"But—" said Francis, sadly.

"I tell you I have no other preparations to make. Having settled my worldly affairs, I have no other preparations to make. What should I have?" emphatically exclaimed Alexander.

What, indeed? How could the duelist prepare for probable death? The Christian soldier going into battle, or upon a forlorn hope, in a righteous cause can invoke the blessing of God on his arms, and can commit his soul, for life or death, into His holy keeping. Yes, even the condemned criminal, however deeply steeped in guilt, can kneel and pray for mercy and forgiveness, for acceptance and admission into Heaven. These can prepare to meet their God.

But how can the determined duelist prepare for death? Can he pray for pardon for past sins when he is about to commit the last, the greatest, the deadliest sin of his life? No, he goes to his fatal work grimly defying man and God, death and hell.

"You have fixed upon the ground?" inquired Alexander, as he brushed his hair, calmly and carefully, as for an evening party, for he had suddenly recovered all his self-possession.

"Yes; it is a small secluded spot at the foot of Noirmont Heights, to which I shall conduct you."

"And the time?"

"Six. The carriage is ordered at half-past five."

"Very well. There are but a few moments left; so

much the better," said Alexander, as he finished his toilet.

When they went into their private parlor, they found hot coffee waiting them, thanks to the careful forethought of Francis Tredegar.

When they had finished their coffee the carriage was announced, and they arose.

"I have laid the train so that the coachman, and even the servants, think we are a party of geologists going to the mountain to search for geological specimens. They will take our pistol-case for a box of tools and think all right," explained Francis Tredegar, as they descended the stairs.

"Then, to complete the ruse, we must leave the cab at some short distance from the dueling ground."

"Of course. And still more to guard against suspicion and interruption, Prince Ernest and his attendants start as if for a journey, make a slight detour, and approach the place of meeting from another direction," answered Francis.

The morning was fresh and bright. The sun was, perhaps, an hour high when Alexander Lyon and Francis Tredegar entered their carriage. Simms, the valet, mounted the box and seated himself beside the coachman. And in this manner they were driven out towards Noirmont Heights.

When they arrived at the foot of the mountain, Francis Tredegar ordered the carriage to draw up.

"Give me that box of tools, Simms. We shall find some valuable specimens of sienites on the other side of the mountain," said Francis Tredegar, in a rather loud voice intended to be heard by the coachman, as the party alighted from the carriage.

"Wait for us here. We may be gone some hours, but don't leave the spot," he added, as he led the way, followed by Alexander and his servant, around a projecting rock, to a retired spot, shut off from observation by surrounding precipices.

As they entered the place at one end, Prince Ernest and his party were seen to come in at the other.

Each adversary, with his attendants, paused.

The prince was attended by his second, his surgeon and his servant.

Alexander had only his friend and his valet.

Major Zollenhoffar and Mr. Tredegar drew out from their respective groups, and met in the center of the ground. There, for the last time, they conferred upon the possibility of an amicable settlement of the difficulty. But the impracticability of reconciling the adversaries consisted in this—that each of the adversaries deemed *himself* the injured, insulted, outraged party, who was entitled to an humble apology from the other, or in want of that the "satisfaction of a gentleman"—which usually means an ounce of lead in his body or fellow-creature's blood upon his soul. Each was willing to receive an apology, instead of a bullet; but neither would hear of making the slightest concession.

When the proposition was made to Alexander, he simply turned away his pallid face in cold and silent scorn.

When it was made to Prince Ernest, the excitable Austrian jumped three feet from the ground and swore that he would have "one grawnd sat-ees-fac-shee-on."

The quarrel having proved irreconcilable, the last preparations were made for the duel.

The ground was stepped off, and the foes were placed by their respective seconds at ten paces from each other—standing due north and south, with the advantage of the light equally divided between them; the insulted sun being just above the mountains due east, and shining down full upon the dueling ground. Major Zollenhoffar had the choice of the four pair of pistols provided. Francis Tredegar was to give the signals.

Having placed and armed their principals, and taken position on opposite sides of the line of fire, and about midway between them, and all being ready, Francis Tredegar looked from one to the other. He saw that Alexander Lyon was pale as death, but still as marble, steady as a statue; and that Prince Ernest was fiery red, but in other respects appeared as calm as his adversary.

But Francis Tredegar himself grew very pale as the fatal moment approached. His voice sounded hollow and unnatural, as he began:

"Gentlemen, are you ready!"

A dread pause and a silent assent, or an assent taken for granted.

"ONE!"

And at the signal the foes raised their pistols.

"TWO!"

They took deliberate aim.

"THREE."

They kept them so.

"FIRE!"

They discharged their pistols and Alexander Lyon fell.

The impulsive Austrian threw down his weapon and, regardless of etiquette, ran over to raise his fallen foe.

Alexander was still alive when they raised him. There was a convulsive shuddering of the form—a nervous quivering of the face—a gasp—"Drusilla!" and all was still as death.

Prince Ernest had his grand satisfaction.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE GRAND SATISFACTION.

Naught's had, all's spent
When our desires are gained without content—SHAKESPEARE.

THE grand satisfaction was received; but it did not prove so highly satisfactory after all. Grand satisfactions seldom do

Prince Ernest raised his fallen foe in his arms, supported him upon his bosom and gazed on his upturned, pallid face in pity and distress.

"Quick! you come hither, monsieur! Quick! you come hither, Doctor Dietz!" he called hastily to his own surgeon, who with the two seconds and the valet were hurrying to the spot.

"Good Heaven! he is killed!" cried Francis Tredegar, throwing himself down in a kneeling posture beside his friend and relieving Prince Ernest of the weight of the body.

Doctor Dietz dropped on his knee on the other side and began hastily to unloosen the clothes and examine the condition of the wounded man.

Major Zollenhoffar bent sadly over the group.

Simms, the valet, stood gaping and staring in speechless consternation.

The impulsive Austrian skipped around the circle, acting in his distress more like an excitable dancing master than an accomplished Prince.

Each face was as pale as the bloodless face below them; for these were not the times of war, and the men were not inured to sudden and violent death.

At length the surgeon looked up from his examination

"Is he quite dead? Is there not the slightest hope?" anxiously inquired Francis Tredegar.

"He is not dead," said Doctor Dietz. Then turning to Major Zollenhoffar, he requested—"Monsieur, oblige me; send someone to the carriage for my case of instruments."

"I will go myself," answered the major, hurrying off.

"Monsieur, you do the favor; send your servant for the water," said Doctor Dietz, turning again to Francis.

"Hasten, Simms. There is a hut around the projection of that rock. Go there and procure some vessel and fill it at the nearest spring and hurry back with it as fast as possible," ordered Francis, speaking eagerly while he still supported the almost lifeless form of his friend.

Simms ran off at the height of his speed to get the water. And all this while Prince Ernest skipped about giving vent to his lamentations and declaiming in his excitement, without his usually careful regard to the construction of the English language.

"My Heaven! I shall wish to kill him not! I know not what he quarrel with me because! what he insult me! what he defy me! what he shoot me because—I know not—I—! A fair woman shall give me her bouquet to hold, to keep, to cherish! Why not? I am the slave of the fair woman! I take her bouquet! It is sweet, it is fresh, it is precious like herself! I press it to my lips! I put it to my heart! Why not? What wrong I do that he shall charge me? shall accuse me? shall shoot me!" he exclaimed, jumping about, gesticulating, and making such havoc of English auxiliary verbs as even the best-read foreigners may sometimes do when speaking rapidly and excitedly.

"Lay your friend down flat upon his back—I wish to probe his wound," said Doctor Dietz to Francis Tredegar,

as he saw Major Zollenhoffar running towards them, with his case of instruments.

Francis Tredegar slowly eased the body down upon the level ground, and then gently drew his hand from under the head.

As he did so, he uttered a cry of horror.

"What is it?" demanded the doctor.

Francis held up the palm of his hand, which was crimson with clotted blood.

"Where did that come from?" asked the doctor.

"From the back of his head. Oh, he is quite dead, or must be soon! He is shot through the brain!" exclaimed Francis in great distress.

"Impossible!" cried the doctor.

"No, no, no!" exclaimed Prince Ernest, vehemently. "I shall not shoot him through the brain! I shall not aim at his head at all! I shall aim at his right arm. I shall not wish to kill him, only to punish him! I shall aim at his right arm, but I shall shoot him through the right side! It shall be a chance, an accident, a misfortune. I meant it not—not I!"

While the Austrian was skipping and exclaiming, the surgeon was examining the back of Alexander's head. The hair was matted with blood from a deep wound there.

"You see it is as I say—the ball has passed quite through his head, and come out here," said Francis Tredegar.

"Impossible! The ball entered the right side of the chest, passed through the right lobe of the lungs, and is lodged here below the right shoulder-blade. See for yourself!" said the surgeon, laying back Alexander's shirt-bosom, so as to show the small, dark, inverted hole at which the bullet had entered.

"But this wound in the back of his head—?"

"Was made by his falling and striking some hard, sharp substance—a fragment of rock, probably."

While the surgeon spoke he was not idle. He took his case of instruments from one assistant and the water from the other.

He carefully cut away the blood-clotted hair, and washed and plastered the wound in the head; and then he cut out the bullet, which lay little more than skin-

deep under the shoulder blade. He dressed the wounds as well as circumstances would permit, and then he said:

"We had better take your friend back to his apartments at the hotel. I will continue to give him my best care there."

Francis Tredegar assented

Simms was once more despatched to the hut to borrow its only door and when he returned he not only brought the door, but was followed by the kind-hearted master of the hut, bringing a load of blankets. With these materials a rude litter was constructed, and upon it Alexander's form was laid. And thus he was borne upon the shoulders of Simms the valet, Knox the hutter, and two laboring men who came and offered their services.

Prince Ernest returned to the hotel in his carriage. Major Zollenhoffar and Francis Tredegar walked behind the bearers of the wounded man.

Alexander's cab went back empty.

"I say," said the hotel servants to the cabman as soon as they saw him, "you took a party of gents out to the mountains to look for minerals, didn't you?"

"Yes," growled the Jehu.

"Well, and they found 'em—at least one of 'em did,—a beautiful round specimen of lead mineral; and he liked it so well he put it into his bosom. But I'm told it didn't agree with him!"

Alexander was carefully carried to his chamber and laid upon his bed.

Around him stood Doctor Dietz, Mr. Tredegar, John Simms, and one or two of the servants of the hotel.

In this more favorable position, his wounds were more carefully examined and skilfully dressed. Both wounds were found to be very serious.

He was relieved of his blood-stained garments and put into a clean suit of under clothes, and again laid back upon his pillow.

During this process he had given but few signs of consciousness—only groaning slightly when being moved, as if motion distressed his lacerated chest.

And then the room was darkened.

"Now let him rest quietly," said Doctor Dietz.

"But will you not give him something?" inquired Francis Tredegar.

"No."

"No opiate?"

"Certainly not."

"No anodyne?"

"Nothing. Let him rest for the present, only renew as they become heated, the cold water compresses on his wounds."

Francis Tredegar constituted himself head nurse, and seated himself beside his patient.

Major Zollenhoffar entered the room.

"Prince Ernest leaves by the ten o'clock boat for Southampton; but wishes to know the state of the gentleman before he goes," whispered the Major to Mr. Tredegar.

"I was about to go and report to the Prince," said Doctor Dietz.

"His Highness requests that you will not leave your charge so long, as he may require your assistance. His Highness will dispense with your services about his own person for the present. But he requests that you will keep him informed of the progress of your patient," said Major Zollenhoffar.

The surgeon bowed low in acquiescence with the prince's behests.

"I hope this arrangement may meet your approbation, sir," said the Major, courteously turning towards Mr. Tredegar.

"It excites my gratitude, sir," replied Francis Tredegar. "It excites my warmest gratitude. We could not probably find such surgical skill for ourselves."

With another bow and an earnestly expressed hope that the wounded man might yet do well, the Major took leave, and returned to his master, leaving the patient in charge of Doctor Dietz, Francis Tredegar and Simms.

Within an hour Prince Ernest and all his suite, except his surgeon, embarked for England.

And *we* must return to General Lyon and Dick Hammond.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE PURSUIT.

The distant danger greater still appears;
Less fears he, who is near the thing he fears.

With many imprecations on the rashness and folly of young men in general and of his own nephew in particular, the veteran accompanied by Dick, took his seat in the three o'clock train for Southampton.

He did not consider it necessary to take a whole first-class carriage for himself and his companion, so the presence of several other travelers in the same compartment with him, restrained his growling.

And soon after the train started, the motion of the carriages rocked him to sleep, and he slept soundly until they reached their journey's end.

Dick, who had alternately read the morning's papers, and dozed through the journey, woke his uncle up as the train entered the Southampton station, where the duelists had passed about ten hours before.

It was nearly seven o'clock.

"Here we are" said Dick, gathering up his light luggage, while his uncle slowly rubbed his eyes and looked about him.

"Eh? well! yes! I suppose we had better call a cab and drive to a hotel and engage rooms first of all," said the General, still rubbing his eyes, and being only half awake.

"I suppose we had better call a cab and drive immediately down to the docks and see if we can hire a yacht or steamboat to take us to Guernsey," suggested Dick.

"Oh! aye! yes! certainly! to be sure! I had forgotten," exclaimed the General.

The guard unlocked the door to let them out.

As they appeared upon the platform, the two detectives who had come down with them joined company.

"Call a cab, Willet, if you please. We will go at once to the docks and try to engage a vessel of some kind to take us to Guernsey

"Yes, sir; but if you please, I think we had better call first at police head-quarters to make inquiries. They may have some later and better intelligence," suggested the detective.

"Exactly! yes! to be sure! You are quite right. We will go there first," agreed the General.

The detective beckoned the cab and gave the order, and they all got into it and drove to police head-quarters.

Willet, who had ridden beside the cabman, got down and went in to seek farther information.

He was gone but a few moments, and then he returned and opened the door of the cab and spoke to the General.

"It is very lucky we called here first, sir; else we might have been fatally misled."

"Why? what's the matter?" inquired the General.

"There was a mistake in the telegram, sir. It was not to Guernsey they went, but to Jersey."

"Tut, tut, that was a very unlucky mistake, and might have proved to be a fatal one, as you said. Are you certain *now* of your information?"

"Quite certain, sir. The duelists took the St. Aubins steamer and sailed for that port at eleven this morning. As soon as the office here discovered their mistake, they telegraphed the correction to London. But of course we had left before that second telegram arrived."

"Have you any farther information?" inquired Dick.

"None whatever."

"Then we must drive to the docks immediately," ordered the General.

The detective mounted the box beside the cabman and transmitted the order.

And they were driven rapidly down to the docks.

They alighted and went about making diligent inquiries for a vessel.

Fortune favored them, or rather Money did. Money is a great magician. No wonder it is sometimes fatally mistaken for a god, and more fatally worshiped as one.

In answer to their inquiries, they were told of a swift-sailing, schooner-rigged yacht, owned by a company that were in the habit of letting it out to parties of pleasure for excursions to the Channel Isles or along the coast. And they were directed to the spot where the "Flying Foam"

lay idly at anchor, and were told that the master of the crew was also the agent of the company.

Encouraged by this information, our party engaged a row-boat, and went out into the harbor, and boarded the "Flying Foam."

The master happened to be on deck. He came forward to meet the boarding-party.

"Is this yacht disengaged?" inquired the General.

"Yes, sir."

"Can we engage it for immediate service?"

"For immediate service—that is very sudden, sir?" remarked the master, looking suspiciously at the speaker.

"I know it is, but so is our business sudden, being a matter of life and death. We cannot wait for the sailing of the steamer. But we are willing to pay extra price for extra haste," replied the General.

And there was that about his stately form and fine face, and martial manner which rebuked the suspicion, while the words, and particularly the promise of extra pay appealed to the interest of the agent.

"You want the yacht immediately, you say, sir?" he inquired.

"Immediately, or as soon as the tide will serve."

"The tide will serve in half an hour, sir."

"Can she be got ready?"

"For what port, sir?"

"St. Aubins."

The master rubbed his forehead and looked down at his shoes, as if in deep cogitation.

"My friend, while you are deliberating, time is flying," said the General impatiently.

"She can be got ready fast enough, sir. It isn't that. Why, sir, you are strangers to us, and we don't know anything of what you are in such a hurry for."

"We go to arrest a party, and prevent a duel, if you must know!" exclaimed the General, impatiently disregarding the signals of the detective, who would have cautioned him.

"Oh! beg pardon, sir; but this is—is going to cost a pretty penny—and——"

"And you don't feel safe as to the payment, eh? If that is all, you may weigh anchor and hoist sail at once,

for I have not come unprovided," said General Lyon, taking out his pocket-book and displaying a large roll of hundred pound Bank of England notes.

"You do not suspect them to be counterfeits, I hope?" laughed the General.

"Oh, no! beg pardon, sir. It is all right now, I am only an agent, sir, and held responsible by my employers."

"To be sure. And now I hope you can set your crew to work."

"Are you going just as you are, sir? Would you like to go on shore first?"

"We have no time to lose in going on shore. We shall go to St. Aubins just as we are. I suppose there are shops in that town where one may procure the necessaries of life?"

"Oh, certainly, sir."

And the captain of the yacht went aft and called all hands on deck, and gave his orders, and, by dint of loud hallooing and hard swearing, got them so promptly executed that when the tide turned the yacht sailed.

They had a very fine run under the starlit sky over the calm sea; but for the painful errand they would have been a party of pleasure. Even as it was, they enjoyed the trip. There was nothing on General Lyon's conscience, or on Dick's mind, to deaden either of them to the heavenly beauty of the night. They had slept on the train, and so now they were wide awake on the yacht.

They walked up and down the deck talking sociably with each other, admiring the elegant form and the swift sailing of the yacht, delighting in the fresh breezes of the ocean, and almost worshiping the glory of the star-spangled heavens.

They walked up and down fore and aft, while the yacht sped over the waters, until they became hungry, and then they remembered for the first time that they had had neither dinner nor tea, nor had brought any provisions for a meal on board.

"It is usual for parties who hire a yacht to find their own grub, I believe, and we never thought of doing it," said Dick.

"We had no time for doing it," said the General.

"Well, I fancy the master does not keep a black fast

He must have a secret store somewhere, so I will just step and see."

And Dick went in search of the master, who undertook to be their host for the voyage.

In twenty minutes after the voyagers were called to supper in the captain's cabin—and to such a supper for hungry men! There were pickled salmon, cold ham, cold chicken an excellent salad, light bread, Stilton cheese, pastry, fruits native and tropical, and such fine wines as can only be procured—or could *then* only be procured, duty free, at the Channel Isles.

They made an excellent meal and then returned to the deck and sat down to enjoy the lovely night and the pure sea-breezes, until twelve midnight, when feeling a little tired, they went down into the cabin and turned in.

Rocked by the motion of the vessel they fell asleep, and slept soundly until the "Flying Foam" entered the harbor of St. Aubins.

Then they were awakened by the captain's steward, who came down to tell them the yacht was in port. The sun was just rising.

The pretty little maritime town lay gleaming in the earliest beams of the morning Behind it arose the dark background of Noirmont Heights. On the right and left, rolled a richly-wooded landscape of hill and dell.

Even the gravity of the errand upon which they had come could not quite make our friends insensible to the novelty and beauty of the scene.

"Will you choose to have breakfast before you go on shore?" inquired the master, coming to the side of the two gentlemen, as they stood on deck looking out upon the harbor, with its little shipping, and the town, with its quaint Anglo-French streets and houses, while they waited for the boat to be got ready.

"Breakfast? No, thank you, not even if it was on the table; for there, I think our boat is ready now," answered the General.

And he went to the side of the yacht, and followed by Dick and the two detectives, descended into the boat.

They were rapidly rowed to the shore.

There were no cabs in sight.

"What is to be done now?" inquired the General.

"There is nothing for it, but to walk up into the town, and over it, if necessary," answered Dick.

"Luckily for us all, that may be done without much bodily fatigue. It is not a very large place," remarked the General.

"If you please, gentlemen, I think we had better look for our men at the hotels. It is still so early that they can scarcely have started on their dueling adventure," suggested one of the detectives.

"Lead the way, then. You know the town, I think you told me," said the General.

"Oh, yes, sir," answered the detective, bending his steps towards the principal hotel.

While they were yet at some distance from the house, they saw a carriage drive off from before it. Slight as the circumstance was in itself, when considered in relation to the hour and other circumstances, it seemed very significant. So they hurried on.

Before they reached the house however, they saw another carriage draw up before the entrance, and a party come out and enter it; and then they saw the carriage drive off, but not in the same direction taken by the first.

"There are our duelists!" exclaimed the detective in triumph, "one party is in the first carriage, and the other in the second."

"But they took opposite directions," gasped the General, out of breath with his rapid walk.

"That was to mislead people. They have taken opposite, but each will make a half circle and meet on the appointed ground unless we stop them," said Willet, striding onwards at a rate that made it difficult for his companions to keep up with him.

"I do not see how we are to stop it now," groaned the General.

"We must take a cab from the hotel, and make what inquiries as to the route taken by the others that we have time for."

While talking they had hurried on with all their might, and now they were at the hotel.

"Is Prince Ernest of Hohenlinden stopping here?" inquired the General, stepping at once up to the office.

"There is a foreigner of rank who arrived here late last night by the Southampton steamer."

"Where is he now?"

"Gone out for a morning ride by the sea, I think."

"Ah! you have other travelers here who arrived by the Southampton boat?"

"Yes; an American gentleman, I think, a scientific man, who has gone out with his servant to hunt for minerals in the Noirmont Heights."

"Ah! a scientific man in search of minerals!" grunted the General.

"By the way, there were two of them, they——"

"Oh, two of them, were they! Master and pupil, very likely; or principal and second."

"They took with them a servant carrying a box of tools."

"Ah! hum! yes! a box of tools! Bless my life, I wonder when that cab will be ready! Ah, here he comes," impatiently exclaimed General Lyon, as Willet, who had gone after the cab, entered and reported it was ready.

The whole party entered the cab except one of the detectives, who, as usual, rode on the box beside the driver. This officer gave, as a general direction, the nearest route to Noirmont Heights. And the cabman took it.

As they left town the detective farther ordered:

"When we reach the foot of the heights, inquire for a cab that passed some twenty minutes before us; and then follow the road taken by that cab until you come up with it."

The cabman touched his hat in acquiescence as they went on.

Just at that instant the report of fire-arms startled their ears, reverberating through the heights and echoed and re-echoed back from rock to rock.

"My——! we are too late!" exclaimed the General, in despair.

"Indeed I fear we are too late to prevent the duel, but we may be in time to succor the wounded," added Dick.

"Can you see the smoke from that discharge of pistols?" inquired the detective on the box of the cabman beside him.

"No, sir, and if I could it would be hard to tell it now

from the smoke of the hutters' chimneys, or even from the mist of the morning."

"Drive then in the direction from which the report came."

"But, sir, it echoes so through the crags, it's a'most impossible to tell which way it did come from. All we can know now is, as how it came from among the rocks."

Willet knew that the cabman was right, since he was sure that he himself could get no correct clue to the route from either the sound or the smoke of the firing.

"Look out for the cab then and do the best you can. We wish to come up with that firing party."

"All right, sir," said the cabman.

But in fact it seemed all wrong. They kept a bright lookout for the cab, hoping, though it was now probably empty, to be directed by its driver to the dueling ground. But many roads traversed these mountain solitudes, and their number and intricacies were confusing. Our party drove on to some distance farther, but saw no cab and heard no more firing.

Then they turned back and struck into a cross-road and pursued it for some distance with no better success. Again they turned from their course, came back upon the main road and took the opposite branch of the cross-road and followed it some distance, but in vain. Finally in despair they turned their horses' heads towards the town, the General saying:

"It is all over by this time; and dead or alive, they have left the ground, and we shall have a better chance of hearing of them at the hotel than elsewhere."

As they drove rapidly towards the town they came upon a group of laborers eagerly talking together by the roadside.

"What is the matter? What has happened? Where was that firing?" inquired General Lyon, putting his head out of the window, as the cab drew up.

"Why, your honor, there have been a row on the heights back there, among some gents, and one of um have been shot and carried to the hotel down yonder in the town; and t'other one is took and locked up," answered one of the laborers, with the usual mixture of truth and falsehood.

"Which was shot?" inquired the detective.

"Why, that I can't say; but any ways it was *one* of um as was shot and brought home on a door, and t'other one was took and locked up."

"Was the man who was shot killed?" anxiously inquired General Lyon.

"Well, your honor, 'when the brains is out the man is dead,'" replied the peasant, unconsciously quoting Shakespeare.

General Lyon sank back in his chair with a deep groan. One of the duelists was killed. Whether it was Prince Ernest or Alexander Lyon, whether his nephew was the murderer or the murdered man, the event was fatal.

"Drive as rapidly as possible back to the hotel," said the detective on the box to the driver by his side.

And they were whirled swiftly as horses could go, to the St. Aubins hotel.

There all was bustle. A duel was not such a common event as to be passed over lightly.

General Lyon sprang out of his cab with almost the agility of youth, and hurried into the office to make inquiries of the clerk.

"What man was that who was shot?" he shortly asked.

"The American, sir; but it is hoped he will do well yet."

"He is not dead?"

"No, sir, surely not."

"Thank Heaven for that! And the other one?"

"The prince? He was not hurt, sir."

"Thank Heaven for that also!"

"They were the parties you were looking for this morning, were they not?"

"Certainly. I had ascertained their object in coming here, and hoped to be in time to stop them. Where have they put my nephew?"

"Beg pardon, sir?"

"The wounded man; where have they put him?"

"In his own room, sir."

"Send a waiter to show me to his bedside. I am his uncle."

"Indeed, sir? Certainly, sir. Come here, John. Show this gentleman to Number 10."

A waiter stepped forward at the order, bowed and led the way followed by the General, up one flight of stairs, along a corridor, and to a chamber door.

"This is Number 10, sir," John said, opening the door.

The veteran entered the room, and found himself face to face with Francis Tredegar, who had risen to see who the intruder might be.

"General Lyon!"

"Mr. Tredegar!"

Such were the simultaneous exclamations of the friends on so unexpectedly meeting.

"You here?"

"I came with Lord Killcrichtoun."

"How is he?"

"The surgeon reports favorably of his wounds, but he must be kept very quiet. Will you pass with me into the sitting-room?—Simms, do not leave your master's side until I return.—This way, General," said Francis Tredegar, rising and opening a door leading into their private parlor.

There the friends sat down together,—the General heated and anxious, Francis Tredegar surprised and curious.

"I followed as quickly as I could after hearing of my nephew's mad purpose. I hired a yacht and pursued him, hoping to be in time to save him. I wish now that I had hired a special train from London. It would have given me three hours in advance, and I should then have been in time," groaned the General, wiping his face.

"Take comfort, sir. It might have had a fatal termination. As it is, we have reason to thank Heaven for an unmerited mercy. Prince Ernest has escaped unhurt, and has returned to England. Lord Killcrichtoun is wounded, but not fatally. 'All's well that ends well.'"

"'That ends well!' Yes, but who can say that this will end well? Oh, Heaven, how much trouble that young man has caused me and all who are dear to me! But he is my only brother's only son! my dead brother's only child! and in spite of all I have said and sworn I must try to save him."

"Is he so near of kin to you, sir? I had not suspected it."

"No; his new ridiculous title, together with the

estrangement that has been between us, would naturally mislead any one who had not known us previously as to the facts of our kinship. You came with him on this Quixotic adventure?"

"Yes, sir," replied Francis Tredegar, blushing and beginning to defend himself before the Christian soldier, "Yes, sir; after having tried in vain to dissuade my friend from the duel, I resolved to see him through it."

"I am not intending to blame you, my young friend. To me, certainly, you meant no wrong; and to my unhappy nephew only kindness. For the rest, it is a matter between yourself and your own conscience. As for me, in the way of a soldier's duty, I have been in some battles; but I would not, nor do I remember any period of my youth in which I would have engaged, either as principal or second, in any duel for any cause whatever," said the brave old veteran.

"Oh, sir—but that is a rebuke; and coming from you, a very severe one," said the young culprit, sorrowfully.

"It is not intended as such, Francis. Men, I know, have different ideas upon these subjects. For instance, I do not believe it lawful in a man, for the gratification of his selfish passions or the 'satisfaction' of his imaginary 'honor,' to risk his life or seek the life of another. I believe it to be a high offence against the Author of all life. Nor could I engage in any adventure upon which I could not invoke the blessing of Heaven."

"Which we could not do on our adventure, certainly. But I do most humbly and thankfully acknowledge Heaven's undeserved great mercy on its issue."

"I am glad to hear you say so, Francis. And now will you kindly touch the bell—it is at your elbow, I see—and tell the waiter when he comes to show Mr. Hammond up into this room."

"Dick is with you?" inquired Francis, as he complied with the General's request.

"Certainly. Did I not tell you so? But I left him to settle with the cabman while I ran in to make inquiries of the clerk."

As the General spoke the waiter entered the room.

"Go down and find out Mr. Hammond and show him up into this room," said Mr. Tredegar.

The waiter bowed and disappeared; but soon came back and ushered in Dick.

There was a start of surprise from Dick at seeing Mr. Tredegar, and then a grave hand-shaking between them.

"Well, my boy, I suppose you have heard matters are not so bad as we feared?" said the General, turning to Dick.

"Yes, sir; thank Heaven. Can I see Alexander?"

"Why, I have not seen him myself yet, except at a distance and covered up in swaddling bands. Tredegar here turned me out of the room before I could get near the bedside."

"Invited you out; brought you here, General," said Francis, deprecatingly.

"It amounts to the same thing, my dear fellow," said the General, good-humoredly. "Tredegar was Alexander's second in this mad affair," he added, turning to Dick.

"So I supposed on seeing him here," answered Mr. Hammond.

"Gentlemen," said Francis Tredegar, "if you will excuse me for a moment, I will go in and see my patient, and then come back and let you know whether you also can see him with safety."

"Go, Francis," said the General, waving his hand.

Tredegar went out, and after a few moments returned and said:

"He seems to be sleeping soundly, or else to be sunk into a deep stupor; indeed I am not physician enough to say which. But in either case, I think, if you come in quietly, you can do him no harm."

Then they all went into the wounded man's chamber and stood at his bedside, and looked at him.

There he lay, less like a sick or wounded patient than the laid-out corpse of a dead man. His hair was cut short and his head bandaged with wet linen cloths. His face was deadly pallid, with a greenish white hue; his eyes were closed and sunken; his lips compressed; and his features still and stiff. His chest was also bandaged with wet linen cloths, and his shoulders and chest wrapped in a sheet instead of a shirt. for the convenience of

frequently changing the dressings of his wound. His form was still and stiff as his features.

On seeing this ghastly sight, Dick uttered an irrepressible exclamation of horror. Even the veteran-soldier groaned.

"It is not half as bad as it looks," said Francis encouragingly. "There is nothing in the world makes a man look so death-like as these white swaddling-clothes, that put us in mind of winding-sheets. The surgeon says he will do well."

"Ah? who is attending him?" inquired the General.

"Prince Ernest left his own physician here to look after him. He is Doctor Dietz, a graduate of one of the medical colleges of Vienna—which, I am told, are now really the best, and are destined soon to be acknowledged as the best medical schools in the world."

"And this eminent surgeon says that the wounded man will do well?"

"These were his very words."

"That is satisfactory."

"And now, General, that you have seen your nephew, I think we had better all adjourn to the parlor. Our patient wants all the air in this room for himself," advised Mr. Tredegar.

When they went back to the parlor, Dick turned to Francis Tredegar, and said:

"You will let us have the use of this room for an hour or two, until we settle what we are to do next."

"Why, certainly. The room is your own. At least it is Alick's, which is *now* exactly the same thing, since he is lying helpless and you are his next of kin. Shall I retire? Do you wish to be alone?"

"By no means. I only want to order breakfast up here. We have been up, walking or driving over the country in pursuit of the duelists, since six o'clock this morning, and it is now eleven, and we have had nothing to eat and are famished."

"Oh, by the way, I ought to have thought of that! allow me!" exclaimed Francis Tredegar, starting up and ringing the bell.

"Breakfast for three, immediately. Serve it in this

room, and bring the best you have that is ready," he ordered, as soon as the waiter showed himself.

The cloth was soon laid and the table spread. And our friends sat down to an excellent meal of rich coffee and fragrant tea; milk, cream and butter of such excellence as can be found nowhere else in the world; fish just out of the sea, beefsteak, chickens, French rolls and English muffins.

"Dick, my dear fellow," said the General, as they lingered over the delicious repast, "one of us must remain here to look after Alick, and the other must go back to London to take care of little Lenny and the young women."

"Yes, sir; and I will be the one to go or to stay, whichever you shall decide. And pray think of your own ease and health, my dear sir, before you do decide," answered Hammond.

"You are a very good fellow, Dick, a very good fellow. But I believe reason and judgment must settle the matter. I will remain here to look after my nephew. He will not be likely to quarrel with me when he sees me, as he might with you if he should find you by his side when he comes to himself. And, besides, I think this quiet, pretty sea-side town will agree with me after the hurly-burly of London. And lastly and mostly—it is *you* who ought to go back to town for your wife's sake."

"All right, my dear sir; it shall be as you please. I confess I like this arrangement best; but if you had said, 'Dick, go and I will stay,' or 'Dick, stay and I will go,' I should have obeyed you without a moment's hesitation, as a soldier obeys his commanding officer."

"I know you would, my boy, therefore it behooves me to consider your interests before I make a decision."

"And now let us see about the time of starting, I must return in the yacht, of course."

"Of course."

"Then it will depend upon the tide. I had better go down, and see the master."

"Yes, I think you had."

Dick Hammond took his hat and went down to the yacht.

Captain Wallace was not on board when Mr. Hammond

reached the deck. The captain was taking a holiday by walking through the town, and probably solacing himself with a pipe and a bottle of brandy at some favorite resort where the old mariner was well known.

So Dick had to wait an hour or two for his return.

When Wallace came back Dick soon discovered that he was well posted up in regard to the event, which was then the one topic of conversation at every coffee room in the town.

"And so you were too late to stop the duel, sir?" were almost the first words the master of the yacht spoke to Dick.

"Yes; but the affair did not terminate so fatally as might have been apprehended.

"No, so I hear—so I hear! And the wounded gentleman was your kinsman, sir?"

"Yes."

"Shall you take him over to England?"

"Oh, no. He cannot be moved at present. My uncle will remain here to look after him; but I return at once, or as soon as the tide will serve."

"That will be about nine o'clock."

"Can you be ready to make sail by that time?"

"Yes, sir; the yacht is yours for the time it is hired."

"Then we will sail at nine. I will be here punctually at that hour."

"All right, sir."

Dick Hammond returned to the hotel, where he arrived about one o'clock. He spent the day and dined with his uncle and his friend.

At half-past eight o'clock he paid his last visit to the bedside of his cousin, in whom, as yet, there appeared but little change.

And then he took leave of all and went down to the yacht; and at a few minutes after nine the "Flying Foam" made sail for England.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A SHOCK.

What is life? 'Tis like the ocean,
In its placid hours of rest,—
Sleeping calmly, no emotion
Rising on its tranquil breast.

But, too soon, the heavenly sky
Is obscured by Nature's hand;
And the whirlwind, passing by,
Leaves a wreck upon the strand.—ANONYMOUS.

"A BLACK cloud, that! rising over yonder—we shall have dirty weather to-night," said the master of the "Flying Foam," coming to the side of Dick Hammond, as the latter stood leaning over the bulwarks of the yacht and looking out upon the receding town and shores of St. Aubins.

Dick raised his eyes to a long black line just visible above the heights of Noirmont, and then said:

"Yes; I think it looks threatening; but the 'Flying Foam' is a sea-worthy little craft, I suppose?"

"Bless you, yes, sir! I've seen her ride safely over seas that would have swamped a ship of the line," answered the master, as he went forward to make ready for the expected "dirty weather."

And dirty weather it was, though not so "dirty" as to endanger the safety of the yacht.

The cloud arose, and spread, and covered the whole face of the heavens as with a black pall, in strange and terrible contrast to the surface of the sea, now lashed into a white foam. A driving storm of wind and rain came on.

Dick, who much preferred the comfortable to the sublime, left the deck and went below to smoke and read by the light of the cabin lamp. But, after one or two attempts, he found the reading process quite impracticable by the motion of the vessel, and so he gave it up.

After a while, he was joined by the master, who had left the deck in charge of his mate.

"It has turned into a settled rain that will last all

night," said Captain Wallace, as he took the chair Dick pushed towards him ; for Dick, as one of the parties hiring the yacht, was king of the cabin.

"Disagreeable, but not dangerous," was Dick's cool comment as he pushed his case of cigars toward his guest.

"Thank you, sir; but, if you don't mind, I'll take my pipe," said Captain Wallace, who soon comprehended that he might take liberties with this good-humored young man who was but too ready to fraternize with the first companion fortune favored him with.

And there the two men sat and smoked through the first hours of the dismal night.

At midnight, they turned in.

Dick slept long and well. It was late in the morning when he awoke. Judging from his previous day's experience, he thought the yacht must be in port or near it. He dressed himself quickly, and went on deck. He found himself still at sea. A slow, steady rain was falling, and dark clouds closed in the horizon. The dismal night had been followed by a dismal day ; and the worst of it was, that he could not sleep through the day as he had slept through the night.

"Good morning to you, sir! a dark sky!" said the master, coming up to his side.

"Yes. Are we near port?"

"Within twenty miles."

"How fast are we going?"

"How slow, you mean? The wind is against us—we are not making more than four knots an hour."

"At that rate, we shall not make Southampton in less than five hours. Let me see," said Dick, consulting his watch,—"it is now ten o'clock. We shall not, at this rate, get in before three."

"No, sir; but you'll have some breakfast now?"

"Thanks, yes! it will help to pass the time, at least."

The master beckoned a boy, and sent a message to the steward.

And, in half an hour afterwards the appetizing breakfast of the yacht was served; and Dick did his usual justice to the meal.

Afterwards he killed the time as well as he could by reading a little, talking a little, and smoking a little.

Affairs also turned out rather better than he had expected. At noon the wind changed, the sky cleared, the sun shone out, and the "Flying Foam," with all her sails set, skimmed over the seas towards England at the rate of eleven knots an hour.

At one o'clock she dropped anchor at Southampton.

Dick settled his last scores with the master,—who was master afloat, and agent ashore,—and then he inquired:

"Do you know anything about the up train, captain?"

"There is an express train starts at a quarter before two, and there is not another train until five," answered the master.

"I'll take that train," exclaimed Dick.

And he made all his own little preparations, and he hurried the men that were getting out the boat to take him ashore.

As soon as he stepped on shore, he ran and called a cab, jumped into it, and, having given his hasty order, was driven rapidly to the station. He was just in time to secure his ticket, spring into a half-empty carriage—and not a moment to spare before the express started.

It was not until the train was in motion and his own hurry was over, that he recollected one or two things that might have been attended to had he chosen to wait a few minutes. First and nearest, he might have taken his change from the cabman, whose fare was half a crown, and to whom he had thrown half a sovereign.

But Dick did not the least regret that neglect.

And then he might have called at the International to see if any letters had been left for him. But neither, upon reflection, did Dick regret this neglect. He considered it was not probable any letters were awaiting there; or, if there were, that they should be of much importance; or, even if so, whether he were not doing the very thing that should be done under such supposatory circumstances, namely, hurrying back to London by the express train. So, upon the whole, Dick was glad he forgot to lose time and miss the express by calling at the International to inquire for letters.

The train flew on with its usual lightning rate of speed and at five o'clock reached its station in London.

He got out upon the platform, carpet-bag in hand, and

began to look for a cab, when he heard a little voice calling:

"Dit! Dit! oh, Dit! tome here, Dit!"

In great surprise he looked about him, confidently expecting to see little Lenny and Pina, and perhaps Anna and Drusilla, come to the station on the chance of meeting him.

But he saw no one that he knew. And though he plunged into the crowd seeking the owner of the little voice in the direction from which he had heard it, he saw nothing of either little Lenny or his nurse.

At length, thinking that he had been mistaken, he gave up the quest, and took a cab for Trafalgar Square.

Afterwards he recollected, as a dream or a vision, the momentary flitting through the crowd of a ragged woman with a child in her arms.

But at the instant of seeing these, he had not dreamed of connecting them in any way with the voice he had heard. With something of that vague anxiety we all feel in returning home, even after a short absence, Richard Hammond hurried to Trafalgar Square.

As soon as he reached the Morley House, he sprang from the cab, tossed a crown piece to the cabman, and without waiting for the change, ran into the house and up to his apartments.

He went straight to the drawing-room, where he found Anna sitting in the window seat.

She turned, and with an exclamation of pleasure started up to meet him.

"Oh, Dick I am so glad you have come back! What news? How did it all end?" she breathlessly inquired as she threw herself into his arms.

"In two words—not fatally," he answered as he embraced her.

"Thank Heaven for that! You were in time, then?"

"No, not in time to prevent the meeting. It had taken place a few minutes before our arrival at St. Aubins. By the way, it was not to Guernsey, but to Jersey, that the duelists went. We found out the mistake in the telegram as soon as we reached Southampton. We were fortunate in being able to hire a yacht and pursue them to St. Aubins."

"But you did not reach there in time to prevent the duel?"

"No, it had already taken place, as I told you."

"But with what result—with what result? Oh, Dick, why can't you speak and tell me?"

"My dear, I did tell you,—with no fatal result."

"But with a serious one. Oh, Dick, what was it? Has poor Alick got himself into trouble by——shooting that Austrian acrobat?"

"No, nonsense! Have more respect for a prince than to call him an acrobat, if he does jump about when he is angered. He was not hurt—he was not touched. Alick was too much excited to aim steadily, I suppose, so his ball went—Heaven knows where. But——"

"But Alick himself,—was he wounded?"

"Alick was wounded in the chest by a ball and in the back of the head by a sharp stone upon which his head struck in falling. Neither of the wounds is considered dangerous. I left him in good hands in the St. Aubins hotel."

"But my grandfather—where is he? Why doesn't he come up? Of course he returned with you?"

"No, he remained in St. Aubins to look after Alick."

"Oh, Dick he remained there! Then he never received our telegram!" said Anna, turning pale.

"Your telegram! No! What telegram? We received none. What has happened, Anna?" demanded Richard Hammond, becoming alarmed.

"Oh, Dick, I thought you knew," cried Anna dropping into a chair and bursting into tears.

"In the name of Heaven what has happened? You are well. But where is Drusilla? Where is little Lenny? I don't see either of them!"

"Oh Dick! Dick! little Lenny is—LOST," replied Anna, uttering the last word with a gasp, and sobbing hysterically.

"Lost! Good Heaven, Anna, little Lenny lost?" repeated Dick, changing color.

"Yes, yes, yes! lost since day before yesterday afternoon—lost since the very day you left. We telegraphed to you the same day. We hoped you would receive the telegram immediately on your arrival at Southampton;

and I who knew that you were going further, hoped that at least you would get it on your return. Oh, Dick!"

"Lost since the day before yesterday, and not found yet," repeated Richard Hammond, in amazement and sorrow.

"Oh, yes, oh, Dick. We have not seen him since—since *you* yourself saw him last. Oh, Dick, he never returned from that walk you and grandpa sent him to take to get him and Pina out of the way, you know," sobbed Anna.

"It would kill my uncle!" exclaimed Richard. "It would kill him! But, good Heaven! how did it all happen? I don't understand it at all. I can hardly believe it yet. Compose yourself, Anna, if you can, and tell me all about it."

With many sobs Anna told the story of little Lenny's abduction, as far as it was known to herself, and also described the measures that had been taken for his recovery, but taken, so far, without effect.

"But his poor young mother,—how does she bear it? and where is she now?" inquired Dick.

"Oh, Dick, poor Drusilla! I do fear for her life, or her reason, in this horrible suspense, worse than death! Nothing but her unwavering faith in Providence has saved her from insanity or death," wept Anna.

"But where is she now?" repeated Dick. "Can I see her?"

"You cannot see her until her return. She is out looking for her child. She is always out looking for him. She takes a cab at daylight in the morning, and drives out through the narrow streets and lanes of the city, keeping watch all the time from the cab windows, entering into all the houses she is permitted to visit, inquiring of the people about her lost child, offering them heavy rewards for his recovery, pointing them to the posters in which his person is described and the great reward offered and setting as many people as she can at work to search for him. Twenty hours out of the twenty-four she spends in this way."

"But this will kill her."

"I think it will. She scarcely eats, drinks or sleeps. She does nothing but look for her child and weep and

pray. When she has worn out a cab-horse, she comes back here to get a fresh one; and then I make her drink a little tea or coffee. At twelve or one o'clock in the night, when the houses are all shut up, she comes back here and throws herself down upon the bed to watch and pray, and perhaps to swoon into a sleep of prostration that lasts till morning. Then at four or five o'clock she is up and away upon the search."

"Poor child! poor child! such a life will certainly soon kill her."

"I sometimes think the sooner it does so the better for her. Her misery makes my heart bleed. I wonder how any woman can suffer the intense anguish of suspense she endures and live and keep her senses."

"Anna, why do you not accompany her when she goes out?" inquired Dick, with some surprise.

"Why, don't you suppose that I do? What do you take me for, Dick? I have always gone with her until this last trip. When we returned home at four o'clock, to get a fresh horse, she took it into her poor head that you and uncle would certainly arrive by the five o'clock train from Southampton, and so she made me stay to receive you."

"And, you say, Anna, that Alick is suspected of being concerned in this abduction?"

"Yes, but I do not know that Drusilla suspects him very strongly now. Pina first suggested it, and we seized on the idea with eagerness. It was so much more comforting to think that he was safe with his father than in danger anywhere else."

"But, you see, that is impossible. His father is lying seriously wounded, several hundred miles away."

"Yes, that is the worst of it; for, if Alick should have employed these men to steal little Lenny from his mother, it is almost fatal to the child's safety that the father should not have been here to have received him from his abductors."

"And yet that may be the very case! Alick, in his madness, since he was mad enough for anything, may have engaged these men to abduct the boy for him. If so, he must have forgotten the danger to which the child would be exposed in the event of this abduction being

completed during his own absence or after his death. And so he must have gone down to Jersey to fight his duel, leaving little Lenny exposed to all the dangers he had invoked around him. It is dreadful to think of! If Alexander Lyon were not morally insane, he would be a demon!"

"To do such a thing as this? But we are not by any means sure he *did* do it, Dick!"

"No, there is a 'reasonable doubt,' as the lawyers have it."

"And Alick should be communicated with immediately, so as to be posted in regard to his son's danger, whether he has had any hand in it or not. If he *has* had anything to do with it, he will certainly, under the circumstances, give us the clue to recover him, for he cannot wish the boy to remain in the hands of such people. If he knows nothing about the abduction, and learns it first from us, still he will render what aid he can in recovering the boy. We *did* telegraph him to this effect at Southampton, but of course he missed *his* telegram as you did yours. But now he must be consulted by letter immediately—write at once, Dick, so as to save this mail," said Anna, breathlessly.

"My darling, you talk so fast I can't keep pace with you or even get in a word edgeways,—Alick is not in a condition to receive or understand any sort of communication, and will not probably be so for some days to come. I left him in a state of complete insensibility, resulting from the wound in the back of his head."

"Good gracious, Dick! and you said he was not fatally, or even dangerously wounded!" cried Anna, aghast.

"And I gave the opinion of the eminent surgeon who is in attendance upon him. A man may be so ill as to be incapable of attending to anything, and yet may not be in any danger at all. But tell me, Anna, have you taken the detectives into your confidence entirely upon this subject, and put them into possession of all the facts of the case and all your suspicions as well? You know you ought to have done it."

"And we *have* done it! For a short time, Drusilla shrank terribly from breathing a suspicion that her husband was probably concerned in the taking off of her

child; but, when it became evident that little Lenny's recovery depended upon the detectives having the full knowledge of all the circumstances attending it, she commissioned me to tell them as much as was really necessary, but entreated me to spare Alick even if I did it at her expense. So I told the detectives everything—everything! They know as much about it as you do; for, in Drusilla's and little Lenny's cause, I would not have spared Alick, to have saved his soul, much less his character."

"And did these skilful and experienced officers share in your suspicions of the father's complicity in the abduction?"

"No, strangely enough, they did not. These people have a noble respect for a lord—Heaven save the mark! They think Lord Killcrichtoun would never have stooped to such an under-handed act, when he might have taken the boy with the high hand of the law."

"Humph! Did they suggest anything themselves? Having told you what *didn't* become of the boy, did they suggest what *did?*"

"Yes, they really did! they suspected—just imagine it,—that the child had been stolen for the sake of his clothes, just as a dog is sometimes stolen for the sake of his collar!"

"Ah, Anna, I pin my faith on the experienced officers. I am inclined now fully to exonerate Alick and be guided by the detectives. Now I begin to see light—now I understand what occurred to me at the railway station!" said Dick, significantly.

"'What occurred to you at the railroad station,' Dick? Oh, Dick! what was that? Anything that concerned little Lenny?" eagerly inquired Anna.

"I should think it did concern little Lenny. As truly as I live, Anna, when I reached town this afternoon and stepped out upon the platform, and while I was looking around for a cab, I heard little Lenny's voice calling me!"

"Oh, Dick! You didn't!"

"As I live I did! He called me as he was accustomed to call me—'Dit! Dit! Oh, Dit, tome here!'"

"Oh! why *didn't* you answer him? Why *didn't* you go after him and rescue him and bring him home?—Perhaps you did! Perhaps you have only been playing

ignorance to tease me! Oh, Dick, don't do it! If you have got little Lenny, tell me so!" said Anna, earnestly, clasping her hands.

"My poor wife, I wish for your sake and his unhappy mother's, that I had the boy here; but I have not. Listen to me——"

"But *why* haven't you got him here! If you heard his dear little tongue calling you, Dick, why in the world didn't you fly to him and seize him and bring him home to his almost distracted mother! *Why didn't* you, Dick?" demanded Anna, ready to cry with an accession of vexation.

"My darling Anna, listen to me, will you? In the first place not having received your telegram, I had no suspicion whatever that Lenny was lost, else of course I should have been on the *qui vive* to find him, and should have followed the voice until I should have got possession of him. But when I first heard him calling me in his strong, cheerful, peremptory little tones, I looked around, fully expecting to see you, Drusilla, the boy and his nurse all come out in force to meet me at the station. But when I failed to see little Lenny or any of you, I considered myself the victim of an auricular illusion."

"But you do not now?"

"No, indeed. I feel sure it was Lenny whom I heard calling me. And since you have told me of the abduction and of the detective policeman's theory of it, I recall to mind the figure of a disreputable looking woman with a child in her arms hurrying out of sight in among the crowd. I remember that the woman's back was towards me and that a shawl was thrown over the child's head. I had but a glimpse of them as they slipped into the crowd."

"Oh, Dick! Dick! if you had but known! What a fatality!"

"It was indeed. But now I must go and give this information into Scotland Yard, that the detectives may institute a thorough search in the neighborhood of the railway station where I saw him."

"Shall I tell Drusilla?"

"Well, let me see:—No, not just yet. I must think about it first. It might increase her anxiety."

"But it would assure her that her child is alive and well and in the city."

"Yes; that is true. Yet you better not tell her until my return. She would be consumed with anxiety to see the one who had really seen and heard little Lenny, and to hear from him all about it. Don't you understand?"

"Of course; but don't be gone long, Dick. Hurry back as fast as you can, and perhaps you may get here as soon as she does."

"I will lose no time."

"But you are just off a journey. Won't you take something before you go?"

"No, Anna; I will wait until I get back," answered Richard Hammond, as he arose and left the room.

Leaving Anna pacing the floor in great excitement and impatience, he went down to the street, threw himself into a hansom and drove immediately to Scotland Yard.

There he made his report, and offered from his own means an additional reward to accelerate the motions of the officers.

He hurried back to the Morley House and up to the drawing-room, where he found Anna still pacing the floor.

She turned suddenly around to meet him.

"I have started them on the new scent, dear," he said, throwing himself wearily into a chair.

"And you are here, as I hoped, before Drusilla has returned; so she will not have to wait for her news."

As Anna spoke there was the sound of a cab drawing up before the house. A few minutes after Drusilla entered the room. Her face was deadly white and her eyes had that wild, wide open, sleepless look seldom seen except in the insane. And yet Drusilla, in all her agony of mind was far as possible from insanity. All her anxieties were marked by forecast, reason, judgment.

Dick arose, and his countenance and gestures were full of sympathy as he held out his hands and went to meet her.

"Oh, Dick! Dick! you have heard of my great loss," she said, putting her hands in his.

"Yes, my dear Drusilla," he answered, in a voice shaking with the pity that nearly broke his heart, as he looked upon her great misery.

"Oh, my Lenny! my Lenny! Oh, my poor little two-year old baby!" she cried, breaking into sobs and tottering on her feet.

Dick caught her and tenderly placed her in a chair and stooped before and took her hands again, saying:

"Dear Drusa, your little Lenny will be found, he will indeed, my dear."

"Oh, I hope so! I believe so!—but this suspense is the most awful anguish in life! Oh, where is he *now?* *Now* at this moment, where is my poor little helpless babe? In whose hands? Suffering what?"

Her look as she said this was so full of unutterable sorrow that Dick could restrain himself no longer.

"Dear Drusa, dear Drusa," he said holding her hands "your child, wherever he is, is not suffering; he is well and cheerful. I know it."

She looked up suddenly as a wild joy flashed over her face, for she had sprung to a too natural conclusion.

"Oh, Dick, you have found him! You have found my boy! Oh, tell me so at once! Oh, don't try to *break* such news to me as that is! Joyful news may be told at once! it never kills! And now you see I know you have found my baby! Oh, bring him to me at once! Where is he? In my room?"

She had spoken rapidly and breathlessly, and now she started up to hurry to her chamber, expecting to find her child there.

Dick gently stopped her.

"Dear Drusilla, I have not got your child. I wish I had," he began, with his hand on her arm.

The look of joy vanished from her face. It had been but a lightning flash across the night of her sorrow, and now it had passed and left the darkness still there.

"*Oh, Dick!*" she groaned, covering her face with her hands and sinking again into her seat.

"But, Drusilla, dear, I have a *clue* to him! I have indeed! And I know that he is alive and well and cheerful."

"Oh, Dick, is this so? Oh, Dick, I know you wouldn't deceive me, even for my own comfort, would you now, Dick?" she pleaded.

"Heaven knows I would not, Drusilla. Your child was

alive and well at five o'clock this afternoon—only two hours ago, for it is now only seven. And though you cannot now find him in your chamber, you need not be surprised at any future hour to find him there."

"Alive and well two hours ago! You are sure, Dick?"

"Sure as I am of my own life."

"*Where* was he, then? *Who* saw him? Who told you?"

"He was at the railway station in the arms of a poor woman. *I* saw him, and *I* heard him."

"Oh, Dick, why did you not bring him to me at once?"

"Dear Drusilla, I did not then know that he was lost. I had just stepped from the carriage to the platform, when I heard little Lenny's voice calling me in a strong, chirping, authoritative little tone, 'Dit! Dit! tome here!' And I looked around, expecting to see him and all of you come to meet me. But I saw nothing of any of you. I only saw a poor woman with a child about Lenny's age and size covered with a shawl and in her arms. Her back was towards me, and she was hurrying away through the crowd. That child was little Lenny, though I did not know it or even suspect it at the time; for I only glanced at him and turned to look for little Lenny elsewhere, expecting to find him with his nurse. When I failed to do so, I thought I had been the subject of an ocular illusion. But when I came home here, and learned that little Lenny was lost, I understood the whole thing. And I went immediately to Scotland Yard and gave the information and set the detectives on the fresh scent. They are as keen as bloodhounds, you know, and they will be sure to find your child. So you need not be surprised to see him brought in and laid upon your lap at any moment."

Another lightning flash of joy passed over her face at this announcement.

"Oh, Dick! Dick! you give me new life! You saw my child two hours ago! Did you see his face?" she eagerly inquired.

"Of course not, else I should have claimed him and brought him home. He was covered with a shawl, I tell you, and hurried through the crowd. I did not know he was Lenny till afterwards."

"But you heard his voice, and you knew that?"

"Oh, yes, I knew his voice; but I did not at the moment know where the voice came from."

"Oh, Dick, what was it he said? dear little Lenny! tell me again."

Dick repeated the words.

"And oh, Dick, did he speak sadly, piteously, imploringly as if he was suffering, and wanted you to relieve him?"

"No, indeed! quite the contrary! he hailed me in his usual hearty manner; and commanded me to come to him, just as he is accustomed to speak to all of us, his slaves, when he is lording it over us and ordering us around," said Dick, so cheerfully that he called up a wan smile upon the poor young mother's face.

"Now, I'll tell you all about it, Drusilla," pursued Dick confidently. "The fact is, the child must have been stolen first, for the sake of the fine lace and gold and coral on his dress; and now he is kept for his beauty to beg with. No doubt, now that the clue is found, he will be recovered in a few hours. And I want you to bear this fact in mind—that you need not be surprised at any moment to see your child brought in and laid upon your lap. Keep that hope before you, and let it support your soul through this suspense, and let it prepare you for the event, so that you may not die of joy when it comes," said Richard Hammond.

And certainly he believed himself justified in giving this advice.

"Dick! dear Dick, you have brought the first crumb of earthly comfort that has come to me since I lost my little Lenny," said Drusilla, gratefully. "But where is uncle?" she asked, suddenly recollecting the General.

"He is detained by some business.

"He is quite well?"

"Very well," answered Dick, cheerfully.

"And now I hope you will be willing to stay at home and rest just one evening, dear Drusilla," added Anna.

"Oh, don't ask me to do that, dear Anna! How could I stay home in inactivity, especially now that I know where to look for him? No, I will drive down to that neighborhood in which he was seen, and I will search for him there," answered Drusilla, firmly and very cheerfully, for hope had come into her heart again.

"And Anna and myself will go with you, my dear Drusa, for we have nothing to do but to devote ourselves to your service until your child shall be found," said Dick, affectionately.

"Then I shall order tea at once, and something substantial along with it," said Anna, rising.

Inspired by the new hope brought to her by Dick, Drusilla's spirits rose.

When tea was placed upon the table, with the "something substantial" promised by Anna, Drusilla was able to join the party and even to partake of the refreshment.

Afterwards, accompanied by her two friends, she got into a cab and drove to the railway station where Dick had seen little Lenny in the arms of the strange woman.

There they drove up and down the streets and roads and in and out among the lanes, and alleys and inquired at many shops and houses for such a woman and child, but they neither found nor heard of one or the other.

To be sure, there were many poor beggar women, and many little two-year-old children; but they did not answer to the description of little Lenny and his strange bearer.

They also found their coadjutors, the detective policemen, in the same neighborhood, upon the same search. The detectives had had as yet no better success than their employers; but their hopes were high and their words encouraging.

They had great sympathy for the bereaved and anxious young mother, and they came to her carriage door with expressions full of confidence.

"We shall be sure to find the little gentleman now, my lady. Now when we know where to look for him. It is a downright certainty, you know. Why, Lord love you, sir, there ain't a woman is this neighborhood as has heard about the child that ain't as interested in the search as we are, and out of downright human motherly feeling too, to say nothing of the hope of getting the reward. Bless you, my lady, take heart, and don't you be taken by surprise any time to see me walk in and put your little boy in your arms. And if I might be so bold, ma'am, I would recommend you to persuade her to go home and go to her rest and leave us to follow up the clue, and just

have faith till I bring the young gentleman home," said the detective, with his head in the door, and addressing in turn the three occupants of the carriage.

"That is what I am telling her," said Dick, "to wait patiently; or, if she can't do that, to wait hopefully until her child is brought home and laid on her lap."

"And now, it is so late, and you have lost so much rest, Drusilla, dear, that I do think you had better go back, and lie down even if you cannot sleep," said Anna, earnestly.

"Friends, you are so kind to me and so interested in my child's recovery, that I owe it to you to follow your advice. So I will put myself in your hands at least for this evening," answered Drusilla.

"That is right, that is right, my dear," said Dick.

"And, my lady, take this truth with you to comfort you —that we will never give up the search until we find the child. We will never give it up by night or by day till we find him. While some of us gets our needful bit of food or nap of sleep, the others will be pursuing of the search till we find him. And when we do find him, my lady, be it midnight, or noonday, or any other hour of the twenty-four I will bring him to you," said the officer, earnestly.

"Oh, do, do, do! and you shall have half my fortune for your pains—the whole of it, if you will, and my eternal gratitude besides!" exclaimed Drusilla fervently clasping her hands.

"My lady, the reward offered in the hand-bills would set me up for life; and, though that is a great object, and was my only object at first, it is not now—it is not indeed! I am most anxious to find the young gentleman, to give you peace—I am indeed."

"I believe you, and I thank and bless you," said Drusilla.

And then the policeman touched his hat, and closed the door, and transmitted Mr. Hammond's order to the cabman.

"Home."

They drove back to the Morley House.

And there Dick and Anna made Drusilla take a glass of port wine and a biscuit, and go to bed.

All arose very early the next morning. Anna ordered

the breakfast, that it might be ready when Drusilla should come down.

Dick soon joined her.

"You will write to grandpa, to-day?" inquired Anna.

"Not unless little Lenny is found. I dread the effect the news of the child's loss would have upon him at his age, and I wish to spare him if possible," answered Dick.

"But if Lenny is not found to-day, and grandpa gets no letter to-morrow, he will feel very anxious at not hearing from us."

"I know it. I must think of some plan by which I can write to him without alarming him, and bring him home here, before telling him of our loss. Here we might break the news to him gently; and, if it should overcome him, here, we can look after him. I will think of some such plan and act upon it, to-day," said Dick, anxiously and reflectively.

While the husband and wife took counsel together, the door opened, and Drusilla, dressed as for a drive, came in.

"Good morning, my dear! Did you sleep last night?" anxiously inquired Anna.

"A little."

"But you are not going out until you have breakfasted, my dear Drusilla?" said Dick.

"I have been out for the last three hours, and have just returned," she answered.

"Good Heaven, Drusilla, you will destroy your life, and all to no purpose! The detectives are all sufficient for this business. You cannot help them," urged Anna.

"I know it; but I cannot rest," replied Drusilla.

"You have been to the same neighborhood? You have seen the officers this morning?" inquired Dick.

"Yes."

"Any news?"

"None; but the men give me great hopes, and I must trust in God."

"Now, Drusilla, don't go up-stairs," said Anna. "Take off your bonnet and shawl here, for here is the waiter, with our breakfast."

Drusilla complied with this advice. And they were

about to sit down to the table, when there was heard a hurried step upon the stairs, and the door was thrown open, and old General Lyon, dusty, travel-stained, pale and excited, burst into the room.

"Is THE CHILD FOUND?" he cried to the astonished circle.

"No; but we have a clue to him," answered Dick, as soon as he could recover his self-possession and his breath.

The old man sank into a chair, covered his face with his hands, and shook as with an ague fit.

Anna hastily poured out a cup of coffee and brought it to him.

"Drink this, dear grandpa, and you will feel better," she said.

The old man raised his head and looked at her.

"How do you do, my dear? I really forgot to speak to you," he said.

"Never mind that, dear sir. I am very well. Drink this. It will do you good," she urged.

"You say you have a clue to him?" he inquired, as he mechanically took the cup from her hand.

"Yes, grandpa."

"Why is not the clue followed up? Why has it not led you to him?

"Indeed, it is being very diligently followed up. We are in hourly expectation of recovering our little Lenny. But, dear sir, please to drink your coffee. You are very faint, and need it very much."

"Where is the poor young mother? Where is Drusa?" he continued.

Drusilla came and knelt down by his side, and took his disengaged hand, and looked up in his troubled face and said:

"She is here, dear uncle; and she trusts in the Lord to restore her child. But you are sinking with fatigue, and with fasting too, I fear. Drink your coffee, and we will tell you all we know about our missing boy."

And Drusilla put a great constraint upon herself that she might comfort him.

At her request he took the refreshment offered to him, and was certainly benefited by it.

And they told him all the particulars of little Lenny's abduction, and of the measures that had been taken for his recovery.

But when he heard of Dick's adventure at the railroad station, he came down most unmercifully on that "unlucky dog."

"You heard his voice calling you and didn't go after him!" he indignantly exclaimed.

It was in vain that poor Dick explained and expounded; the old man would hear of no excuses.

"Sir! do you think if *I* had heard that helpless infant's voice calling *me*, I would not have obeyed it with more promptitude than I ever obeyed the commands of my superior officer when I was in the army? What *can* you say for yourself?"

Dick had no word to say why sentence of death should not be immediately pronounced on him.

But Drusilla came to his relief by turning the conversation and inquiring:

"Dear uncle, how was it that you heard of little Lenny's being lost?"

"By the newspapers, of course. I was sitting by the bedside of——"

Here Dick trod slyly upon his uncle's toe.

The General stopped short.

Drusilla perceived that there was a secret between them that must be kept; so, without suspecting that it concerned herself or her Alick, she respected it, and turned away her head until the General recovered himself sufficiently to pursue the subject in another manner.

"You asked me how I learned little Lenny's loss, my dear. Well, yesterday morning I was sitting by the bedside of a friend whom I had undertaken to look after, when the morning papers were brought to me, and I saw the advertisement. That was at nine o'clock. There was a boat left at ten for Southampton, and I took it and reached port at midnight, I took the first train for London and got here this morning."

Such was the General's explanation, given in the presence of Drusilla.

It was not until after they had all breakfasted, and he found himself in his own bedroom alone with Dick, that

he was able to make a report upon Alick's condition—a report that Dick subsequently transmitted to Anna.

"Well, his condition is even more precarious than when you left him; irritative fever has set in, and he is delirious —or was so when I left him. He had not once recognized me. I know the surgeon thinks him in a very dangerous condition; although, of course, he will not admit so much to me. But oh, Dick! the child! the child!"

"Be comforted, sir. The child was safe and well in this city yesterday. We have the most skilful and experienced detectives in the world searching for him, and they will be sure to succeed."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ALEXANDER STRIKES A LIGHT.

"A death-bed's a detector of the heart."

So is a sick bed. A man may have passed through the greatest college in the world and carried off its highest honors; may have traveled over every foot of land and sea; may have learned all else that this earth has to teach him—*yet* if he has never had a good, dangerous, rallying spell of illness, his education has been neglected.

Alexander Lyon had been a strong, arrogant, despotic man, and not from any *in*ternal force of the spirit, but by the *ex*ternal support of great physical strength, sound health and large wealth. Of the reverses of these he had no experience in his own person, and not enough of sympathy with others to realize them to his own imagination. Poverty, sickness, death, were to him abstract ideas. He had no personal knowledge of them.

True, he had lost both his parents by death; but they were very aged; and his father had died in an instant, like a man called away on a hasty journey; and his mother had followed, after a short illness; and their decease had left upon his mind the impression of absence rather than of death.

Certainly, within a few hours before his duel he had been forced to think of his own possible death, but it was

as of a sudden and violent catastrophe, which in his great excitement he was desperate enough to brave and meet.

But he never imagined being wounded and mutilated, and laid helpless and languishing on a bed of weakness and pain.

Yet here he was.

On the third day after that upon which he had been wounded, an irritative fever set in, and from having been stupid and quiet he became delirious and violent.

General Lyon had left him, as we have seen.

And Francis Tredegar had also, soon after, gone to London on imperative business.

And Alexander was now in the hands of the skilful surgeon whom the magnanimity of Prince Ernest had placed in attendance upon him. And the surgeon was assisted by the valet Simms and by the servants of the hotel.

For eight terrible days the wounded man burned with fever and raved with frenzy. For eight days, within his broken and agonized frame, an almost equal struggle between the forces of life and death went on. But, by the aid of his strong constitution and of his skilful surgeon, life at length prevailed over death.

It was about the dawn of the critical ninth day, that the fever finally left him.

The surgeon, who, on that particular night, had watched by his bed, was the first to perceive the signs of reviving life, in the moisture of the sleeper's hands and the moderated pulsations at his wrists.

"The imminent danger is over now. He will live and recover,—unless he should have a relapse, which we must try to prevent," said Doctor Dietz to Simms, the valet, who had shared his watch.

Simms, who, for the last nine days, had never once been in bed, but had snatched his sleep when, where, and how he could,—sitting, standing, and even walking—yawned frightfully, and said he was glad to hear it, and asked if he might now lie down.

The surgeon told him that he might not; that yet, for a few hours, he must watch beside his master; afterwards, when his master should awake, he (the man) should be relieved.

And, so saying, the surgeon went away, to get some sleep for himself.

And Simms lay back in the best easy-chair, just vacated by Doctor Dietz, and stretched his feet out on the best footstool, and closed his eyes in slumber.

And the only watcher beside the wounded man was the All-seeing Eye.

But all the danger was over,—the fever was cooled, the frenzy calmed, and the patient slept on,—all the more quietly, perhaps, because his attendant slept also and the room was so still.

It was, I said, just at the dawn of day and about four o'clock, when Doctor Dietz pronounced the crisis favorably passed, and then left him.

At eight o'clock the surgeon returned to the sick-room, where he found both master and man still asleep.

Without waking Simms, he went around to the other side of the bed, and examined the state of Alexander. His former opinion was now confirmed. The patient was sleeping calmly and breathing softly. His pulse was regular and quiet, and his skin cool and moist.

"It is a decided convalescence," said the surgeon to himself.

And then, fearing to wake up the attendant lest he should disturb the patient, the doctor himself went about on tiptoes, putting out the night taper, opening the windows, and setting the room somewhat in order.

Then he went down-stairs to get his own breakfast and to order some proper nourishment to be prepared for the wounded man to take as soon as he should awake.

When he again returned to the room he found Simme awake and sitting upright in the chair.

The doctor raised his finger to warn the valet not to speak or make a noise, lest he should disturb the sleeper and then signed him to leave the room.

And the valet gladly took himself away.

Doctor Dietz seated himself beside his patient to watch for his awakening. As it is neither useful nor entertaining to sit and stare a sleeper in the face, the surgeon took out a newspaper from his pocket and began to read, lifting his eyes occasionally to look at his charge. But at length he got upon several columns of highly interesting

editorial treating upon the politics of Prussia, and he became so absorbed in the subject that he read on, forgetting to glance at his patient for fifteen or twenty minutes. He might have gone on for thirty or forty minutes more without lifting his eyes from the paper had he not heard his name whispered.

With a slight start he turned and looked at his charge.

Alexander Lyon was lying awake and calmly contemplating his physician.

Doctor Dietz dropped his paper and bent over his charge.

"You are better?" he said, quietly.

Alexander nodded.

"How do you feel?"

"Weak."

"How long have you been awake?"

"Two—or three—hours—I think. I don't know," whispered Alick, feebly and with pain and difficulty.

"Oh no!" said the surgeon, taking out his watch and consulting it—"not near so long as that, though it may seem so to you; not more than fifteen or twenty minutes at the most."

And Doctor Dietz put up his watch and took hold of the wrist of his charge.

"I've—been ill—long—long," whispered Alick, looking up from his dark, hollow, cavernous eyes.

"No; there again you are mistaken. You have been down little more than a week. But it is always so when there has been a period of semi-consciousness. The patient loses all calculation of time, and on recovery either fancies that no time at all, or else a very long period, has elapsed during his illness. But now listen to me. You are very much better, and you are on the high road to a speedy recovery. But you must not, as yet, exert yourself at all. You must not even speak, except when to do so is absolutely necessary, and then you must only whisper. Whenever you can answer by a nod, or a shake of the head, or whenever you can make your wishes known by signs, do so, instead of speaking. You must spare your lungs as much as possible. If you follow my direction in this it will be the best for you. Will you do it? Mind, *nod*, if you mean yes."

Alexander nodded.

"That's right. And now—do you feel hungry or thirsty?—Stop! don't answer that question, because I didn't ask it right, and you can't answer it without speaking. I will put it in another form. Do you feel hungry?"

Alexander nodded.

"And thirsty?"

Alick hesitated a moment and then nodded.

"Ah! I understand. You are quite sure you are hungry; but you are not so very sure that you are thirsty. And upon the whole you feel as if you would like something to eat and to drink as well. Just as we all feel about breakfast time, eh?"

Alexander nodded and smiled.

"Quite right," said the surgeon.

And then he rang the bell.

"Would you like black tea, cream toast, and poached eggs?" inquired the surgeon.

He was answered by the regulation nod.

The waiter came, and received the surgeon's orders to prepare the required refreshments and to send the valet to the room.

And when Simms entered, and while waiting for the breakfast to be prepared, the surgeon, assisted by the valet, changed the dressings of the patient's wounds, and made him clean and fresh and comfortable, so that he might be able to enjoy the delicate repast that had been ordered for him.

After his change of clothes, and his nourishing breakfast, he was laid down again upon fresh pillows, and his bed was tidied and his room darkened, and he himself was enjoined to rest.

And rest was of vital importance to him; for though his wounds were now doing well, yet the effort to speak, or to move, was still not only difficult and painful, but very injurious and even dangerous to his lacerated chest. So he was enjoined to rest.

Rest?

His bed was fresh and fragrant, and on it there might be rest for the pain-racked, wearied body. But what rest could there be for the newly awakened mind and startled conscience?

Lying there in forced inactivity, in his half-darkened chamber, unable to read, forbidden to talk, with nothing to engage his attention without, his thoughts were driven inward to self-examination. He struck a light and explored the gloomy caverns of his own soul. What he found there, appalled him. There were devilish furies, ferocious beasts, poisonous reptiles, gibbering maniacs—these were the forms of the passions that had possessed him, that still possessed him; but they were lethargic or sleeping now. Should he—could he cast them entirely out while they were so quiescent?

And there were their victims and his own—the bleeding forms of wounded love; the fallen image of dethroned honor; the ghastly skeletons of murdered happiness.

What a city of desolation, what a valley of Gehenna, was this sin-darkened soul!

He groaned so deeply that the surgeon came to his side.

"Where is your pain?"

Alexander shook his head; he could not tell.

The surgeon examined the wounds, but found them doing very well; and he changed their dressings, but this did not seem to do much good.

The doctor wondered that his patient still suffered so much. He could not understand any better than Macbeth's physician, how to minister to "a mind diseased."

The convalescence of the wounded man was not nearly so rapid or assured as his surgeon had hoped and expected. How could it be, when he was so haunted by memory and tortured conscience? In these long still days and nights on the sick-bed in the dark chambers, he was forced to look back upon his own life, to judge his own deeds. What had they been? What were they now? False and cruel he pronounced the one and the others—false and cruel his deeds, darkened and ruined his life.

But out of all the gloom and horror shone brightly one form—holy as a saint, lovely as an angel—the form of his injured wife. Oh, with what an intense and vehement longing he longed for her presence!—longed for it, yet feared it—feared it, though in the image that he saw in "his mind's eye" the whole face and form glowed aud vibrated with compassion and benediction. Blessing brightened the clear brow; pity softened the dark

eyes; love, love unutterable curved the lines of the crimson lips.

Was it strange that he should have seen her only in this light?

Remember, he who had loved her and made her happy, and had wronged her and made her wretched—he had seen her beautiful face beaming with heavenly happiness, or quivering with anxiety, or darkened by despair; but he had never—never once seen it distorted by passion.

Oh, how he longed for the beautiful vision to be realized to him—longed and feared!

What would he not have given to have had her then by his bedside? He felt how soft and cool her fingers would fall upon his fevered forehead; he saw how lovingly her eyes would look on him; he heard how sweetly her tones would soothe him.

Yet it was not for all this he wanted her at his side.

It was that he might make what atonement was yet in his power for the wrongs he had done her; that he might lay his proud manhood low at the feet of this meek girl, and ask her pardon; that he might take her to his heart again, and devote his life to make hers happy.

Oh, that he might do her some great service, and so win her back!

He wished now that she had been poor, so that he might have enriched her; or sick, so that he might have taken her all over the world for her health; or that she had had an enemy, so that he might have killed or crippled that enemy and dragged him to her feet. And here one of those crouching furies stirred again in his heart, and a feverish excitement made him irrational.

Oh, that she were poor, or ill, or abused, that he might enrich her, or serve her, or defend her, and so win the right to ask her forgiveness!

But she was none of these. She was as independent of him as any queen could be. She was immensely wealthy perfectly healthy, and highly esteemed; and, finally, no one had ever abused her but himself; and on himself only could he take vengeance. He was an utter bankrupt, without the power of bringing any offering to her feet in exchange for her mercy.

When tortured by these thoughts, he would so toss and

groan as to raise his fever and inflame his wounds. And all this very much protracted his recovery.

And through all this gloom and horror still he saw the heavenly vision, like Dante's angel at the gates of Hell, and still he longed to have it realized; longed, yet feared; and ever he prayed:

"Oh! that I could do her some great service! Oh, that the Lord would take pity on me and give me the power!"

Alexander, among his other thoughts, of course thought of the duel that had laid him upon this bed of penance.

In the natural reaction—the calmness that succeeded to the excitement of his passions, when reason had opportunity to act—he saw that he had no just cause for the jealousy that had driven him to one of the maddest acts of his life.

That Prince Ernest should have admired Drusilla was not only natural but inevitable, since every one who was brought into her company did the same; that he should have testified this admiration with continental enthusiasm seemed almost excusable; but that his sentiments went further, or that Drusilla would have tolerated any attentions unworthy to be received by her, Alexander in his sober senses could not believe.

Now that like the prodigal of Holy Writ he had come to himself, he perceived that his jealousy, like every other passion of his soul, had been insane in its excess and frantic in its exhibition.

Now how fervently he thanked Heaven that the duel into which his temporary madness had driven him had not resulted in death to his adversary and blood-guiltiness to himself.

But—and this was a very serious question—how had the mad duel affected Drusilla.

It was always, he knew, most injurious, even to the most innocent women, to have her name mixed up in any such matter.

He himself had been very cautious in this respect; but had others concerned been equally so? And, above all, had the duel got into the newspapers, and, if so, with how much exposure of the circumstances?

Of course he could not tell. He longed to know; yet he shrank from asking questions. He would have ex-

amined the papers, but they were kept out of his way, and he was forbidden to read.

Thus in bitter self-communings, in remorse, in suspense and anxiety, the first days of his convalescence slowly wore away.

Francis Tredegar had not returned and he had remained in the hands of the surgeon and the valet.

And although he was debarred from reading the newspapers, and forbidden to converse, and so was left in ignorance of the most important matters that concerned him, yet he had learned something of what had transpired near him since the mad duel.

He had partly surmised and partly overheard enough to inform him that Prince Ernest, a frequent invalid himself, had at some self-sacrifice dispensed with the invaluable services of his own medical attendant, that he, Alexander, might have the advantage of that surgeon's constant presence at his bedside. And this circumstance led Alexander to a true appreciation and respect for the Austrian, who was as noble by nature as he was by descent.

And there was something else he had to learn.

CHAPTER XXIX.

ALEXANDER'S DISCOVERIES.

Thou turnest mine eyes into my very soul,
And there I see such black and grained spots,
As will not leave their tinct.—SHAKESPEARE.

One morning when he, Alick, seemed better and stronger that usual, the surgeon seated himself by his bedside and said:

"I should tell you that you were not forgotten or abandoned by your family while you were in danger, sir."

"By my family——! I have——" Alexander was about to say, "no family," but he caught himself in time.

Come what might, he would not deny Drusilla and her child.

—"You have an uncle and a cousin, sir," said the surgeon, finishing Alexander's sentence, but not in the man-

ner Alexander had first intended—"an uncle and a cousin, sir, who were warmly interested in your welfare. General Lyon and Mr. Hammond, sir! They in some manner received information of the intended duel; they hired a yacht and followed you here; but they arrived too late, they found you badly wounded and lying insensible on this bed. The cousin returned the same day to London; but the uncle remained here until you showed signs of consciousness and gave us hopes of recovery, when—being suddenly called away by important business, of I know not what nature, he too left the island. But before going he made an arrangement with Mr. Tredegar, by which the last-named gentleman was to write every day and keep the General advised of the state of his nephew. Mr. Tredegar kept his part of the compact, I know, until he also had to leave."

Alexander did not reply for some moments; and when he did it was merely to say:

"I thank you for telling me this."

Alexander fell into deep thought. Here was another enlightenment. Here was another subject for self-reproach if not for deep remorse.

The high-toned, tender-hearted old gentleman! The frank and kindly young man! How noble, pure and loving all their course had been during these family troubles, in comparison with his own! How they had always stepped in and saved himself and his victims from the worst consequences of his violent passions.

But for General Lyon and Richard Hammond where would Drusilla now have been? Would she, could she have had the strength, when discarded by him to have struggled on, through her desolation, unsupported by their strong and tender manhood?

Alick groaned and tossed, as he thought of these things.

In fact he was beginning to see himself and others in a new light. It seemed to him now that he had wronged everybody who had been brought into close companionship and intimate relations with himself.

First, he had wronged his cousin, Anna, his earliest betrothed, in leaving her for Drusilla; but that was the least of his offenses, since the betrothal had been neither his work nor Anna's, nor yet agreeable to the one or the

other. Next, he had wronged—most bitterly wronged—his young, fond, true wife, whose love and faith had never known the shadow of turning; and this he now felt to be his greatest sin. And he had wronged his uncle, the gallant old veteran, who had always cherished him with a father's affection. He had wronged his other cousin, that frank, affectionate, "unlucky dog," who was always ready to forgive and forget, and to be as fast friends as ever. He had wronged the noble Prince Ernest, by assaulting him like a bully, upon no provocation, and driving him into an unseemly duel.

Good Heavens! when he came to reckon with himself, whom had he not wronged whenever he had had the power?

No wonder he tossed and tumbled on his bed, and raised his fever, and inflamed his wounds, and protracted his recovery, and in other ways gave his surgeon a world of trouble.

But with all, as he had a magnificent constitution,—if that is not too big a word to apply to a little human organism,—he continued to convalesce.

One day he was permitted to sit up in bed for a few moments, and he felt himself much refreshed by the change of posture. The next day he sat up a little longer, with increased advantage.

At length there came a day when the patient was so much better that the surgeon ventured to leave him in the care of the valet and of the people of the hotel, and to go for a holiday to the neighboring town of St. Helier's.

That day Alexander sat up in bed, well propped up with pillows, and waited on by Simms.

The valet had trimmed him up nicely, and, at his request, had placed a small glass in his hands that he might look at his face.

And a very pale, thin, haggard, cadaverous countenance it was to contemplate. And the clean-shaved chin and the short-cropped hair added nothing to its attractions.

"By my life! I look more like a newly-discharged convict than a decent citizen or anything else," muttered Alexander to himself as he handed back the glass.

"Any more orders, sir?" inquired the valet.

"No—yes; now that Dietz is off for a holiday, I will

take some recreation too, in my own way—Simms!"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you know whether they keep the files of the London papers here in the house?"

"I can inquire, sir."

"Do so."

The valet left the room, and, after an absence of a few minutes, returned with a pile of newspapers in his hands.

"Here is a file of the Times for the last month, sir," he said.

"Lay them on the foot of the bed where I can reach them, and slip off the first one and give it to me."

"Here it is, sir. It is the twenty-seventh."

"That is day before yesterday's. Is there not a later one?"

"No, sir; perhaps——"

"Well?"

"Perhaps it is in the reading-room, sir. It must have come by the last boat—yesterday's Times must, I mean, sir. They tell me they always get it the day after publication. Shall I go and see if I can find it, sir?"

"Yes—no," said Alexander, quickly changing his mind from one purpose to another, as is often the case with convalescents, and less from caprice or irresolution than from a momentary forgetfulness of what they really do want. "No," he repeated, suddenly remembering that he wished to ascertain whether any unpleasant notice had been taken of his foolish duel by the press. "No—I—you needn't go after the late paper just yet. I have been laid down here nearly a month, and have fallen so far behind the world's news that I must go back and post myself up. I will begin with the paper following the one I left off with; and I will glance over them all in turns to see what the world has been doing while I have been lying here. Give me the paper of the date of the second of June."

The valet looked through the file, and handed the required copy.

"Now leave the others there where I can reach them."

"Yes, sir. Any more orders?"

"No; you may leave the room. I will ring if I should want you."

Left to himself, Alexander opened the paper and glanced

over its contents. Column after column, page after page, of that voluminous journal passed in rapid review before him. But no notice of the duel was to be found in that number. He threw it aside and took up and as carefully examined another; but with no better success. Then he took a third, of the date June fourth, and in it almost the first thing that met his eye was the paragraph of which he was in search.

It was under the head "JERSEY," and it read as follows:

"An 'affair of honor' so called came off yesterday morning, in the neighborhood of St. Aubins, between His Highness Prince E———t of H———n and his Lordship Baron K——n of K——n, in which the noble lord was the challenger. The occasion of the hostile meeting is said to have been a beautiful young widow, whose debut at the American Ambassadress' ball a few days since created such a sensation. Fortunately for the madmen concerned, the duel did not end fatally for either party. The princely H——n escaped scatheless and has returned to his own country. The noble K——n is lying somewhat seriously wounded at St. Aubins, where it is hoped he will have leisure to repent his folly. Such 'affairs' are relics of barbarism, unworthy of an enlightened community and of the nineteenth century. Where were the police?"

You may imagine with what feelings our chivalric Alexander read these comments. So this was the light in which sensible and law-abiding people viewed his heroism.

"As for me," said he, as he laid the paper down, "it serve me right; but I am truly sorry that *she* has been even alluded to in the affair. She has not been mentioned by name or even by initial, however, and I am consoled by that circumstance."

Then he turned to other parts of the paper, where he found something to absorb his attention and to drive the memory of the affair from his mind.

"Eh! what is this?"

"'ONE THOUSAND POUNDS REWARD?'

"What state-prisoner has run away now, of such importance that a thousand pounds is offered for his recovery?" said Alexander, as he looked more closely at the advertisement.

"Ah! what's this? 'A child lost!'—a—Heaven have mercy on my soul, it is Drusilla's child!" he exclaimed, turning even paler that he had been before, as he read the description of the missing boy.

"Lost? Lost on the afternoon of the second of June? Let me look at the date of this paper. It is the fourth. Has he been found yet, I wonder? He must have been found before this. Let me see—to-day, is the twenty-ninth. He was lost twenty-six or seven days ago. How long was he lost? When was he found? I must look over the next papers and judge by them. Of course the advertisement was discontinued when the child was found."

And saying this to himself, Alexander took up the next paper in succession, and the next after that, and another and another still, until he had examined some twenty-three or four more papers. But ah! in every one of them appeared the advertisement for the lost child. And the amount of the reward offered was constantly increased.

In the first half-dozen papers it was one thousand pounds; in the next it was increased to fifteen hundred; after that it was raised to three thousand pounds. The last paper he examined was one of the date of June twenty-seventh, in which the advertisement was still standing.

"Good Heavens! not found up to the day before yesterday! Missing for twenty-five days!" exclaimed Alexander, as he turned over and grasped the bell pull and rang a peal that speedily brought Simms in alarm to his bedside.

"It is your wound broke out again, sir?" exclaimed the valet, seeing his master's disturbed and excited look.

"No, it is nothing of the sort. Simms, go down-stairs and see if you can get me the last number of the Times that has arrived on the island. If it is not in the reading-room, or in the coffee room, or if anybody else has it, or in short, if you can't procure it for me in the house, go out into the town and try to find it at some bookseller's or news agent's. Be quick, Simms."

"Yes, sir, I will," answered the man, hurrying from the room.

Alexander sank back upon his pillow to wait for his servant's return. He had not to wait very long.

In less than ten minutes Simms re-entered the chamber, bringing two papers in his hand.

"Here is the Times of yesterday morning and the Express of yesterday evening, sir. I got them both of the news agent close by."

"Give them to me!" exclaimed Alexander, eagerly grasping the papers.

He hastily examined the Times. Yes, there was the advertisement still standing. He turned to the Evening Express, and there also it stared him in the face, with a new date, the date of the day of publication, and with a still higher raised reward.

Five thousand pounds were now offered to any person or persons who should restore the child, or give such information as should lead to restoring him to his distracted mother.

"Not found up to yesterday evening! Poor Drusilla! poor, poor Drusilla! and poor little Lenny!" groaned Alick, as his eyes were rivetted upon the advertisement.

Then a bright thought struck him; a Heavenly inspiration filled him. His countenance became eager and irradiated.

"I will go in search of her child! I will devote all my days and nights, all my mind and all my means to the search; and I will find him, if he is not dead. If he is above ground I will find him! And when I find him I will go and lay him in his mother's lap and ask her forgiveness, and she will grant it me for the child's sake! Oh! I prayed Providence to give me the power of doing her a service, and now I have got it. It cannot be but I shall find her child, and so, regain her love!" he murmured.

Then looking up from his paper he called out:

"Simms!"

The valet, who was at the other end of the room engaged in closing the window blinds to exclude the hot rays of the midday sun, turned and hurried toward the bedside.

"What o'clock is it, Simms?"

"A quarter-past twelve, sir," answered the man, after consulting his silver timepiece.

"At what hour did Dr. Dietz say that he would return here?"

"At ten to-night, sir, unless something unexpected should turn up to cause you to require his services before that time. In which case, sir, I was to sent a mounted messenger after him."

"Not return until ten o'clock; that is well; for I must get away from this place to-day; and if he were here he would be sure to oppose my doing so, and I want no controversy with my kind physician,– Simms!"

"Yes, sir."

"Go fetch me a time-table of the boats that leave the Island to-day."

Simms vanished, and after an absence of a few minutes returned and said:

"If you please sir, there are no time-tables. But the head waiter says as how the only boat that leaves St. Aubins for England is the steamer that sails for Southhampton at ten o'clock every morning."

"Is that the only boat?"

"The only one that leaves St. Aubins, sir; but there is another steamer leaves St. Helier's every afternoon at three o'clock for Portsmouth, sir!"

"Let me see! How far do they call St. Helier's from here?"

"About three miles, sir."

"That will do. Go down-stairs and tell them to send me my bill, including Dr. Dietz's. And then order a fly to be at the door by two o'clock. And then pack up my traps and yours as quickly as possible. We start for England in an hour."

The valet stared at his master in speechless astonishment for a moment, and then gasped:

"For England, sir!—In an hour, sir!"

"Yes! Don't I speak plainly enough? Be quick and do as I tell you."

"But, sir, what would the doctor say? You have never left your room yet since you have been wounded!—scarcely left your bed, sir! Consider your health, sir? Consider your life!"

"Consider a fig's end! There are matters of more

moment than my poor life that demand my presence in England," said Alexander.

"But, sir, the doctor said——"

"Simms! are you my servant, or the doctor's?" demanded Alexander, sternly.

"Yours, sir, of course."

"Then obey me at once, or I shall send you about your business."

Simms knew that he had a profitable place, and a good master, though a self-willed one. He had really no desire to oppose him in this or any other measure. He was heartily tired of this "beastly hole," as he chose to call one of the prettiest little maritime towns in the world. So, after having done his duty and relieved his conscience, by offering a respectful remonstrance to the proposed exertions on the part of the invalid, he yielded to circumstances and set himself promptly to work to obey his master's orders.

Alexander wrote a note of thanks and of partial explanation to Doctor Dietz, enclosed within it a munificent fee, and sent it down to the office to be handed to the surgeon on his return.

Alexander was a free man and a sane one. And though the people of the hotel were greatly astonished at his sudden resolution to travel in his present invalid condition, and strongly suspected him of running away from his physician; and though they had every will to stop him, they had not the power to do so.

And at two o'clock, all his arrangements having been completed, Alick, attended by his servant, entered the cab that was to take him to St. Helier's.

He reached there in time to catch the steamer; and at three o'clock he sailed for Portsmouth.

CHAPTER XXX.

LITTLE LENNY'S ENEMY.

Where the haters meet
In the crowded city's horrible street.—BROWNING.

PINA was right in her surmises as to the manner of little Lenny's abduction. And he really had been carried off by one of the two men whom she had detected in watching him.

And this necessitates the explanation of some circumstances, which, however, did not become known until some time afterward.

It not unfrequently happens that the heirs of an estate, or a title long held in abeyance and supposed to be extinct, are poor and obscure people, quite ignorant of their connection with, or right in such an inheritance.

The claim recently confirmed by the House of Lords is a case in point. The claim to the barony of Killcrichtoun is another.

Alexander Lyon was totally uninformed as to his right to the title and estate of Killcrichtoun until his visit to England and Scotland, when, in searching the records of his mother's family, he discovered the facts that led to his subsequent action in claiming the barony.

But the investigations that ensued developed other facts, and brought forward other heirs, or rather one other, who would surely have been the heir had Alexander been out of existence.

This was a descendant of a younger sister of that ancestress through whom Alexander Lyon claimed the title.

The name of this man was Clarence Everage. He was that most to be pitied of all human creatures—a poor gentleman, with more children than means to support them; more mouths to feed than money to find food; more intellect than integrity; more refinement than firmness. A man now about thirty-five years of age, with a long, hopeless life before him; a man with some beauty

of person, dignity of presence, and graciousness of manner; with sensitive feelings, and delicate tastes, and soft white hands; a man who loved fragrant baths and fresh linen every day; and cool, clean, quiet rooms to live in; and well-dressed, soft-speaking light-stepping people about him; and respect and attention and observance from all who came in contact with him; one who loving to be happy and comfortable himself, loved still more to make others happy and comfortable; one naturally more prone to confer favors than to ask them; more willing to give than to take; naturally rather vain than proud, sensitive than irritable, and weak than wicked.

And yet a man who had to live in mean lodgings in a small, dark house, in a narrow dirty street in the Strand, where in two musty stuffy rooms he crowded his wife, who was as refined and delicate as himself, and six little girls, who would have been beautiful had they not suffered so much from confined air, bad food and scant clothing.

His position really was not at fault. England, and especially London, is so fearfully overcrowded; the competition in all trades, professions and occupations is so hopelessly great.

He was an usher in a third-rate London school, and he had an income barely sufficient to support himself in comfort; and of course it will be said that he ought not to have married.

Ah! but Nature had fooled him in his youth as she fools so many. And yet I take that back. I will utter no such blasphemy against Holy Nature. No doubt Nature is always right, and it is always well that children should be born, even though they should suffer cruelly and die early, since they are born for the eternal life, through to which this earthly life is but a short, rough gateway, soon passed.

But without excusing themselves with any such hypothesis as this, the young man and young girl had followed Nature, taken the leap in the dark, and plunged head—no, *heart* foremost, into their imprudent marriage. And the natural consequences ensued. The beautiful children came as unhesitatingly as if they were entering upon a heritage of wealth, health and happiness, instead

of want, illness, and misery; and every year added to their number.

The wretched father groaned for himself and his wife.

But the gentle mother reminded him that Heaven, in afflicting them with lighter trials, had always spared them the one great trial that they never could be able to bear—namely, the loss of their children. Not one of the little ones had been taken from them. Each and all had fought valiantly and successfully through measles, whooping-cough, scarlet fever, and the rest; but whether *because* of, or in *spite* of the cheap quack medicines the impoverished parents poured down their throats, I cannot say.

It was when they were expecting their seventh child that Clarence Everage, who had been hunted out by Alexander Lyon and the lawyers, was suddenly called from his obscurity to bear witness in the investigation of Mr. Lyon's claim to the Barony of Killcrichtoun.

It was but a link in the chain of evidence that he was to furnish. But any information he was expected to be able to give was as nothing compared to the tremendous revelation that was about to be made to himself.

He, the poor usher, starving in a miserable third-floor back in Wellington street, Strand—heir-presumptive to a barony!—the ancient Barony of Killcrichtoun! And but for this intrusive foreigner actually Baron of Killcrichtoun himself. For be it remembered that Clarence Everage knew nothing whatever of Alexander Lyon's wife and child.

The investigation, as you know, terminated in Alexander's favor.

And this witness and self-styled heir presumptive was liberally remunerated and sent home to his poor lodgings, pale wife and pining children, to brood over the vicissitudes of this life—to brood until he, whose temper had through all his trials been sweet, kind and cheerful, became soured and embittered and sorely tempted.

What right, he asked himself, had this man—whose branch of the Killcrichtoun family had been self-expatriated for generations—to come over here and claim the ancient barony?

He was not a Scotchman, nor even an Erglishman, that should he hold it.

And *what* good did it do him, after all?

Beyond the mere title, the new baron cared little for the inheritance. He had not even visited Killcrichtoun. While to him the poor usher, what a god-send, what a treasure, what a paradise it might have been. This estate which was nothing to the wealthy Virginian, would have been everything to himself.

He, had he possessed it, would have sold one-half the land to get funds to cultivate the other half. He would have pulled down the most ruinous parts of the castle to get materials to build up the better part of it. And he would have employed the starving tenants of the little hamlet in repairing his dwelling and tilling his ground, and a part of the wages he paid them would have come back to himself in the form of rents.

He, the despised usher, oppressed by master and chafed by pupils, would then be lord of the manor, with servants and tenantry dependent upon him.

His poor wife, who was looked down upon by small shopkeepers and snubbed by her laundress, would be a baroness and "my lady."

His pale little girls, bleached by the fogs of London, would grow strong and rosy on the bracing air of the Highlands.

All this would happen, if only he, and not this interloping American, were Baron of Killcrichtoun.

He brooded too constantly and profoundly over the advantages that must have accrued to him had he been the fortunate inheritor of Killcrichtoun, as might have happened had it not been for this interloping stranger who had no business in the country.

He felt a morbid interest in the foreigner who was so fortunate as to succeed to the title, and be able to disregard the small estate that came with it.

He took pains to learn as much as possible of Lord Killcrichtoun's history. He was often in his lordship's company, in streets and shops and other common ground where they could meet on equal terms. He talked much *to* him and of him, and so learned more of his antecedents than was known to any one else out of the family in London.

He often met Alexander in his well-known haunts,

walked with him, sat with him, and smoked with him, Occasionally, at Alick's invitation, he ate and drank with him.

Why not? If Lord Killcrichtoun was unmarried, as he was generally supposed to be, then Clarence Everage was heir presumptive to the title and estate.

True, he knew that the present baron was some five or six years younger than himself, and in that view of the case there was little hope of the inheritance.

But, on the other hand, Alexander, like the generality of American men, was tall and lank, thin and sallow, with that appearance of ill-health which was not real, but which was greatly enhanced by the careworn and haggard expression of countenance which had characterized his face ever since his abandonment of Drusilla.

So, upon the whole, Clarence Everage, gazing gloomily upon Lord Killcrichtoun, thought the chances of his lordship's death by consumption, and of his own accession to the title and estate, within a year or two, were very good.

"If only," he said to himself, "the fool should not in the meantime marry and have an heir. That would make the case hopeless indeed."

This anxiety lest Lord Killcrichtoun should marry and have an heir before death should claim him, so preyed upon the poor gentleman's spirits that he watched over his lordship more carefully, and inquired about him more anxiously than ever.

In the places where they chanced to meet, he could neither see nor hear any sign of the misfortunes he dreaded. No one knew whether his lordship was meditating matrimony or not; no rumor of his contemplating conjugal life was afloat.

Of course the impoverished gentleman in his threadbare coat, limp linen and broken gloves, could not go into those circles from which Lord Killcrichtoun would be likely to select a bride; and so, though Everage in their mutual resorts learned nothing to alarm him, he was tormented with uneasiness as to what might be going on out of his sight in places from which his poverty excluded him.

He went into coffee-rooms, not to partake of the re-

freshments for which he could not pay, but to look at the fashionable news, longing to see at what dinners, dances, or conversaziones, he, who was keeping him out of his estate, had been seen, and fearing to find, under the head of "APPROACHING MARRIAGES IN HIGH LIFE," some announcement of the calamity he so much dreaded—the impending marriage of the baron. But of course he never found anything of the sort.

"I hope the fellow has too much sense—yes, and too much conscience, to think of taking a wife. Men in his wretched state of health should never marry; for when they do, they always entail their infirmities upon any children they may happen to have," said Everage, with virtuous emphasis; for his wish being father to his thought, he had fully persuaded himself that Alexander was in a very bad way—a doomed man, rushing with railroad rapidity to the grave.

"If he will only refrain from marriage for a year or two all will be well," said Everage to himself, as visions, not of wealth, rank and grandeur, but simply of independence, respectability and comfort floated before his eyes.

Sitting in his small, stifling room, surrounded by his little pale girls and his invalid wife, breathing the heavy city air, he thought of Killcrichtoun that might yet soon be his own. He saw the forests of fragrant pine and feathery firs; the fields of oats and barley; the streams full of trout and salmon; the mountains with their game; the old tower with its cool rooms. He saw his wife and daughters blooming with health and smiling with happiness; he felt the bracing breezes of the Highlands fan his brow. Sitting in his stuffy little room, he saw and felt all this in a vision, and he longed and prayed, oh how earnestly, that this vision might yet be realized.

But a very great shock was at hand for him.

One day, while Lord Killcrichtoun and himself were walking on Trafalgar square, they met a nurse and child, with whom his lordship immediately stopped to speak.

At the very first sight of the child, Everage was struck with its unmistakable likeness to Lord Killcrichtoun. And when the baron took the boy in his arms, and hugged and kissed him with effusion, Everage looked on in sur-

prise and disapprobation, for he thought that he knew his lordship was unmarried, even while he detected the relationship between the two.

But Alexander took his son, and, desiring his friend and the child's nurse to wait for him there, he crossed over to the Strand, and went into a toy shop.

Left alone with the girl, Everage was sorely tempted to question her, but a sense of honor and delicacy prevented his doing so.

After a few minutes, Alexander returned to the spot, leading the little boy, who had his hands full of toys.

"Take him home to his mother now, nurse. The air is too sultry to keep him out longer," he said, kissing his child and delivering him over to Pina.

When the girl had carried off her charge, the two gentlemen walked on a little while in silence.

Everage, in his anxiety, was the first to speak.

"That is a very handsome little boy," he said,

"Yes, he is a fine little fellow," answered Alick.

"He is very like you," continued Everage.

"I suppose he must be since even I can see the likeness."

"And he is very fond of you," persevered Everage.

"Yes," answered Alick in a very low tone.

"Your nephew, of course?" inquired Everage, after a little hesitation, hoping that, after all, such might be the relationship of the baby to the man.

"No, he is not my nephew. I have not, nor ever had, sister or brother to give me niece or nephew. I am a lonely man, Everage."

"Ah!" sighed the other, with a look of sympathy—but he thought in his heart, "So much the better!"

"But—he is my son, Everage!" said Alick, with emotion.

"Your son?" exclaimed the would-be heir of the barony.

It was what he had at first suspected, even when he thought Lord Killcrichtoun was unmarried; but yet he was ill-at-ease, and, out of his anxiety, burst this exclamation:

"I did not know that you had a wife."

"Nor *have* I! nor can I *ever* have—that is the curse of

my life! But I had one once. The subject is a painful one, Everage!"

"I *beg* your pardon," said the poor gentleman, with real regret that he had torn open an unsuspected wound, and real sympathy for the evident sufferings of the victim, felt amid all the disappointment and dismay with which he heard of the existence of Lord Killcrichtoun's son and heir, and the consequent blasting of all his own hopes of the inheritance.

The tone and look of sympathy touched Alexander's lonely heart. He longed to speak to some one of his sorrows; to some one with whom it might be discreet and safe to deposit the secret troubles of his life. To whom could he so well confide them as to this poor gentleman, who seemed to possess some fine feelings of delicacy and honor, and who was certainly by circumstances far removed from those circles in which Alexander would abhor to have his domestic miseries made known.

"There is no offense," said Alexander, answering the last words of Everage, "you could not have known the tenderness of the chord you touched. And I thank you now for the kindness your tones and looks expressed. Come! shall we hail a hansom, and go to Véry's to lunch?"

"Thanks,—with pleasure!" said Everage, who always keenly appreciated and enjoyed the game, the salads, and the wines at Véry's; "but—then he glanced at his rusty, threadbare coat, his dusty old boots, and his day-before-yesterday's clean shirt-bosom.

"Oh, never mind your dress, man! Who the mischief ever dresses to go to lunch in the morning?—Cab!"

The empty hansom that was passing drew up. The two gentlemen got into it, and Alexander gave the order:

"Véry's, corner of Regent and Oxford streets."

Arrived at the famous restaurant, Alexander told the cabman to wait, and led his friend into the saloon.

There curtained off in a snug recess, and seated at a neat table, upon which was arranged a relishing repast, Alexander, while making a slight pretense of eating and drinking, told his story, or part of it to Clarence Everage, who listened attentively, even while doing full justice to the good things set before him.

"You will understand now," said Lord Killcrichtoun,

in conclusion, "how it is, that though I am a husband and a father, I have neither wife nor child."

"That is very deplorable, if it is really so," said the poor man, with a real compassion for sorrows that he was inclined to consider much heavier than he had been called upon to endure. For what, he asked himself, were the worst pangs of toil, care and want compared to the grief that would be his portion should he, in any way, lose his own fond wife and dear children?—"Very, very lamentable, if it is indeed true! but let us hope it is not so; that your imagination exaggerates the circumstance. Let us trust that the quarrel is not irreconcilable; that the husband has still a wife, the father still a child."

"No, I have no wife nor ever shall have one; for though Drusilla is neither dead nor divorced, she is hopelessly estranged from me. I have no wife, nor ever shall have one."

"But you have a child. He at least is not estranged from you."

"No, but he belongs to his mother who bore him in peril of her own life, and has nurtured him tenderly and loves him fondly, I know. He belongs to her."

"But the *law* gives him to you. You can claim him when you will."

"But I would cut off my right hand, I would lay down my life, before I would take him from his mother, or do anything else to give her pain."

"But, man, he is your heir!"

"Yes, he is my heir, and only child. If he should live, of course he will inherit Killcrichtoun. If he should not, why the barony will go to some distant branch of the family, unearthed in the investigation set on foot by my lawyers, when I laid claim to the title and estates. And—why, bless my soul, old fellow, it may go to you! May it not?"

"Failing yourself and heirs of your body, it may," replied the poor gentleman, gravely. And then he pushed back his chair and showed signs of impatience to be off.

The usher was allowed but half an hour to take his lunch, and even now he was due at his schoolroom and in danger of a reprimand from his principal.

Alexander perceived his uneasiness and rang the hand bell that stood upon the table.

Everage took out his purse.

"Put that up, if you please, Everage. I invited you here; and you are my guest," said Alexander, taking out *his* purse.

"See here, Killcrichtoun! upon one pretense or another *you always* contrive to do this thing. Now I am not going to stand it any longer. Unless you let me foot the bill sometimes, and unless you let me foot it now, I can never lunch with you again," said the poor gentleman, with much dignity; then turning to the waiter who at that instant made his appearance, he added—"Let me have our bill immediately."

The mercury vanished to execute the order.

"But, really, Everage——" began Alexander.

"But, really, Killcrichtoun," interrupted the poor gentleman, "though this is too small a matter to dispute about, you must let me have my will."

Alexander gave way.

The waiter came and put the bill in Everage's hands and the usher, who had that day received his second quarter's salary, amounting to barely fifteen pounds, paid thirty shillings for their lunch, and bestowed half a crown on the waiter who served them.

Alexander sighed and groaned in the spirit as he saw this; but he could do nothing on earth to prevent it, or to remedy it. What in the world is one to do in such a case with a sensitive, poor gentleman? He would be alive to all your ruses, and feel hurt by them and defeat them. Alexander would rather have paid ten times the amount from his own ample means than seen the usher discharge the bill from his slender stock.

Then they arose from the table and went back to their cab.

And Alick ordered the cabman to drive to the street where the school-house in which Everage served was situated, and he dropped the usher.

I declare that up to this day Clarence Everage had entertained no idea of gaining his ends by evil means.

But the story that he had heard from Alexander was a startling and curious and interesting one; and he could

not help brooding over it and speculating upon it. Lord Killcrichtoun had a wife and child! The fact at first view seemed very fatal to Everage's hopes of ever succeeding to the title; but upon closer consideration it was not so. Lord Killcrichtoun was hopelessly estranged from his wife; but he was not divorced from her, nor free to marry again. He had but one child, his son and heir; and if anything should happen to this child, Lord Killcrichtoun, in his peculiar circumstances, could not hope for other legal offspring, and Everage would be quite secure in his position as heir-presumptive of the barony.

And Alexander really looked paler, thinner, and more cadaverous than ever! Truly in much worse health than before! Clearly not long for this world! And if anything should happen to the child before his father's death, Everage would not long be kept out of his inheritance!

If anything should happen to the child! Dangerous speculation! In monarchies it is treason even to *imagine* the death of the sovereign. And it is so with much good reason, since such imaginings often realize themselves.

It could not be treason; but it was treachery in Clarence Everage even to imagine the removal of the little child that stood between him and the inheritance of Killcrichtoun. It was not only wrong but perilous for him to do so. But it seemed as if he could not help it. Day and night he brooded over the idea, with a morbid intensity akin to monomania. And there was his poverty, and the pale faces of his poor wife and little girls, to goad him on. And there was that painful computation of pounds, shillings and pence, that agonized straining of his soul to make his meagre wages meet their merest wants. And now the cruel extravagance into which his pride and sensitiveness had betrayed him in paying for that lunch at Véry's had almost ruined him for this quarter. There was now no possible way in which he could make the two ends meet for the time.

And he knew, as only the experienced in such matters can know, and he dreaded as only the proud and sensitive can dread, the troubles that must follow—the degrading squabbles with his landlady, the humiliating apologies to

the butcher and the baker—nay, the sight of his wife's shabby dress and his little daughters' all but bare feet.

And he thought how different all this would be were he the heir of Killcrichtoun, as he should be but for Alexander Lyon's son.

He thus "imagined" the death of the child and the advantages that must accrue to himself in that event. But would he have "compassed" the death of the child for any such advantage?

Oh, no! not for Killcrichtoun, or a hundred Killcrichtouns, would he have committed such a crime. But—he was too prone to consider certain facts in the statistics of population, life and death; how it was set down that more than one half the children born, died before they had attained the age of three years. He supposed little Lenny to be about two years and a half old. He wondered whether the child had passed safely through measles, whooping-cough, scarlet fever, and all the other perilous "ills" to which children's "flesh is heir," or whether he had yet to encounter all or any of them.

He had gathered from Lord Killcrichtoun's narrative that the child lived with his mother and her friends at the Morley House, and that he was often taken by his nurse to walk in Trafalgar square and its vicinity.

And so, morning, noon, and evening, when not engaged in his school duties or with his family, he prowled about the neighborhood, to waylay little Lenny and his nurse, and watch over his health.

One day, when no one else was very near, he saw Pina and her charge together, and accosted them.

"How do you do, my little man?" he inquired, patting Lenny on the head or rather, the hat.

"Me not man—me itty boy," answered Lenny, staring.

"Oh, little boy, are you? Well, how do you do, little boy?" smiled Everage.

"Me very well,—how you?" politely responded Lenny.

"I'm very well too."

"Me dad you very well too."

"Thank you."

"You dot itty boy home?"

"No, I've got no little boy at home; but I have got six little girls."

"Sit itty dirl? Me habben dot itty dirl home."

"Haven't you? what a pity!"

"You bin you itty dirl hee me?"

"Yes, I'll bring my little girls to see you," said the poor gentleman, turning away from the child with some emotion, and beginning to talk with Pina,—who was looking on and smiling with proud delight at the bright intelligence and gracious manners of her little charge.

"He is a very fine little fellow, nurse," said Everage.

"Yes, sir, lots of ladies and gentlemen, who stop to speak to him, say the same," answered Pina, gazing with satisfaction upon her little Lenny.

"And he is very like his father," pursued Everage.

"Well, sir, I never could see the likeness myself, I'm sure," answered the girl resentfully, and wondering how this stranger came to know who was little Lenny's father.

"He seems to be perfectly healthy?" went on the would-be heir presumptive.

"Why, he never had any real illness for an hour, sir. Even when he was teething, he only ailed a little—nothing to speak of at all, sir."

"Ah, well, he's like a young bear—all his troubles are before him."

"Indeed, sir; then I think you are more of a bear, yourself to be a-saying of such things! Come, master Leonard, let us go home—mamma will be wanting us."

"Dood-by! come hee me soon," said Lenny, holding out his hand to the stranger.

"Good-by, my little lad!" said Everage, pressing the child's offered hand as he turned away.

Little Lenny and his nurse went back to the Morley House, and Everage bent his steps to the Newton Institute for Young Gentlemen.

"More than one-half the children that are born alive die before they reach the age of three years, do they? Well—clearly this youngster belongs to the half that live! Never has had any of those infantile disorders that slay infants of 'two years old and under,' with a massacre more terrible than that of Herod of Galilee. Ah! but the little fellow has them all to meet, for they are sure to come, sooner or later; yes, but he has a fine constitution with which to fight disease; well, but still this is certain, that

children of robust frames, full-fleshed and full-blooded, never get over these inflammatory fevers as easily as do those of thinner and feebler organization. These very healthy children are exceedingly apt to go off in these acute attacks of disease. Master Lyon, Master of Killcrichtoun, you will have to take the risk with the rest."

Such were the reflections of Everage as he bent his steps that afternoon to the Newton Institute, and while he sat at his desk examining boys in their Latin and Greek exercises and algebraic and geometrical problems; and while he sauntered sorrowfully and wearily home to his gloomy lodgings.

But he hated himself with a righteous hatred for these evil haunting thoughts, that he had no moral power to exorcise.

From what he had heard from Lord Killcrichtoun, and from what he had observed with his own eyes, some things seemed very certain.

As that Lord Killcrichtoun would never be legally divorced from his first wife, and therefore would never be free to take a second; that he would never be reconciled to her, and therefore never have another child; that his lordship was in a very bad way and could not long hold the barony of Killcrichtoun; and, finally, that little Lenny would be the future Baron of Killcrichtoun, unless he should very soon die, or—*disappear;* and, finally, that little Lenny was not inclined to die to please anybody!

But there was that other alternative:—he might *disappear*—he might disappear as children had often done before now, he might disappear forever.

I know not at what precise time this last alternative presented itself to the poor gentleman's mind. But it would not be banished, it clung to him, it tempted him, it nearly crazed him.

He prowled about Trafalgar square, and waylaid little Lenny and his nurse, and informed himself as to the child's haunts and habits.

If Pina never spoke of this "poor white herring," as she disrespectfully called him, it was because he was only one of several persons who, passing daily at the hours the nurse would be out with the child, would stop to

notice him, to smile on him, or—when time permitted—to talk to him, being charmed by his infantile beauty, intelligence, and graciousness. And, even if the nurse had told the mother of this stranger's seeming partiality for the child, the information would not have surprised her, for to Drusilla it seemed inevitable that every one who saw her peerless boy must be charmed and delighted with his beauty and brightness.

So unsuspected and unrestricted, Everage contrived to see a great deal of little Lenny—a great deal more than even his father saw of him.

But Alexander was entirely ignorant of these interviews, for Pina did not love little Lenny's father well enough to gossip with him on that or any other subject, or indeed to open her mouth to him with one unnecessary word.

And the poor gentleman, for his part, took good care never to approach the child while his father happened to be near him.

In fact, of late days, Clarence Everage had seen but little of Lord Killcrichtoun. From some latent sense of honor or sting of conscience, the poor gentleman had kept out of the way of the wealthy baron. Since Everage had been speculating on the chances of the child's death or the practicability of his "disappearance," he could not bring himself to look that child's father in the face, much less to eat or drink with him, as had for a time been his frequent custom.

But Everage brooded over the possibility of little Lenny's "disappearance," as he called it, until, as I said, it tempted, blinded, crazed him.

The vague dream "*disappearance*" began to shape itself into the very distinct idea, "ABDUCTION."

Children had been abducted before now, for less reason and with more difficulty than could be the case with this child; for how great a reason, almost how just a cause, he said to himself, had he for abducting Leonard Lyon; and how easily, in the child's unguarded walks, might he be snatched up and carried off; and how completely in crowded London might he be concealed.

The idea grew and formed itself into a purpose

CHAPTER XXX.

THE ABDUCTION.

In a jumbled heap of murky building.—KEATS.

THERE was at this time a wretched old hag who, summer and winter, rain and shine, sat under the shadow of St. Mary's le Strand begging—but not audibly, for to have done so would have broken the municipal laws, and to have drawn the police upon her and consigned her to the work-house.

On the contrary, she was ostensively peddling in a small way. In her talon-like hands she held a bundle of matches, which she silently tendered to every passer-by. The matches were worthless and were not really intended for sale, but only for a blind to the police and a cloak for her begging; and everybody understood this as well as she did; for though she never opened her lips to ask for alms, every fluttering rag about her was a tongue, and every look a voice.

So occasionally a passer-by would drop a half-penny in the hand that offered the matches and then go on his way.

But the great stream of people pouring through that crowded thoroughfare usually passed without noticing her, for the frequency of such sights, and of much worse sights of misery, in the London streets, and the utter impossibility of relieving them all, hardens the hearts of the people.

But the poor pity the poor. And our poor gentleman, passing the poor beggar twice every day, pitied her—pitied her, even though she had once picked his pocket of his coarse white linen handkerchief, and he knew the fact beyond a doubt. And almost every day, in passing, he gave her a half-penny; and once a quarter, when he got paid off, he gave her a sixpence.

But in all the years in which she had sat there, and in

which he had passed twice a day in going and returning to and from his employment, he had never happened to see any one else give her anything.

Of course he knew that she must make something by sitting there or she would not stay; but it was so very little and so very seldom, that he never knew it from personal observation. And from all this he concluded that she was deadly poor.

He often wondered where she lived, how she slept, what she ate, with whom she kept company, and who were her kinsfolks, if she had any.

That she consorted with the lowest thieves and vagrants, with the most desperate men and women ready for any crime, he felt morally certain. Had she not picked the pocket of her benefactor?

But, still he pitied her and almost justified her; for he knew what poverty and its bitter temptations were, and besides, while his charity was large his moral sense was not very clear; and, poor as he was, he would have lost every pocket-handkerchief he possessed before he would have prosecuted this miserable old woman, or even withheld from her the tri-weekly half-penny or the quarterly sixpence.

Now, when the vague idea of "*disappearance*" shaped itself into the distinct thought of ABDUCTION, and the thought grew into a purpose, and the purpose strengthened into resolution, he remembered the old woman under St. Mary's le Strand, and believed that he could make her subservient to his use.

One rainy day he went out at noon for the usual recess. It was a day and an hour when there were comparatively few passengers in the street. He went in search of the old woman whom he found in her accustomed place, but backed up close against the wall to secure some partial shelter from the pelting rain.

"Have you no umbrella—not even an old wreck of one?" were the first words addressed to her by Everage.

"Umberrelly? Bless the dear gentleman, I never had a umberrelly in my life! How should the likes of me have a umberrelly? They bees for the rich people, honey."

"But your knees are getting quite wet," said Everage.

"And so they is, dear gentleman, and I shall get the

rheumatiz as sure as sure!" said the woman, taking the cue and beginning to whine.

"I shouldn't be surprised if you did. Why do you sit out here in this weather?"

"Good gentleman, hadn't I better sit here and sell my matches than stay at home and starve?"

"Sell your matches? Why, that's the identical box of matches you have had to sell for Heaven knows how long, and you haven't sold it yet."

"That is true; but, dear gentleman, I might sell them to-day—I might sell them any time! There is no telling when a stroke of luck might fall."

Everage knew she was speaking deceitfully; but he not only found excuses for her, but he found in her words an opening for his proposition.

"Yes," said he, "you are quite right. There is no telling when a streak of luck may fall—even this very day."

"It has come this very day, good gentleman. Sure the sight of your handsome face is always lucky; and it is worth while to come out and sit in the rain for the chance of seeing it, if one should get no other good."

"The sight of my face may be lucky to others; but the luck is only skin deep; it never strikes in to do the owner any good," laughed Everage, as he dropped a sixpence in the hag's hand.

"Oh! thanky, sir! Sure you're the great binifactor of the poor! May the Lord——" and here she began a great string of blessings to which a bishop's benediction would seem a trifle.

"That will do. Now tell me your name. You see as long as I have known you I have never heard it."

"Rooter, sir; Margaret Rooter, at your honor's service; born in lawful wedlock of honest parients, your worship, and christened in this very same church as you see before you, Sim-Merrily-Strand,* sir, as ever was."

"Well, Mother Rooter," said the poor gentleman, dropping his voice to a low tone, "would you do a service for me, if it should be to your own advantage?"

"Is it would I do a service for your honor's worship?" said the woman, gazing on the coin in her hand and chuckling, for she readily divined that the required serv-

* St. Mary's le Strand.

ice was an unlawful one, which must be paid for handsomely "on the nail," and ever afterwards in the shape of of blackmail. "And is it Margaret Rooter as you ask will she do that service for her binnyfactor, as he has kept her from starving this many a day? Aye, will I, even if it is to the setting on fire of Northumberland House, or Sim-Merrily-Strand itself. Marry come up indeed! What has Northumberland House, or Sim-Merrily-Strand either, ever done for the likes of me, that I should prefer them before your honor's worship, whose bounty have given me many a half ounce of tea and handful of coal? Sim-Merrily-Strand indeed!"

"But I have no grudge against the church, or the palace either, and wish them no harm, but all good. The service I require of you is of another sort, but almost equally dangerous and needing——"

"I don't care a pen'orth of gin what it needs, nor what it don't, no, nor yet for the danger, so as it ain't killing and hanging matter. I never could pluck up courage to take a life or to risk the gallows. But as for the rest—look here, your honor! what has the likes of a poor creature like me to be afraid of in this world? Is it the police? Is it the judge? Is it the jail? Lord love your honor, the police treat me better nor my own brothers, for they never punch my head, nor give me black eyes! and the judge is a gentleman compared to my landlord, for he never turned me out into the street, as every one of them is sure to do sooner or later. And as for the prison, it is a perfect queen's palace, compared to the leaky, crowded, filthy garret where I stop. Your honor must know I have been in both and know the differ! So as I was taking the liberty to tell your honor, if the service is anything less than a hanging matter, I'm your woman."

"Speak lower when you do speak; but do not speak at all when people are passing by," said Everage, in a very low tone, as some street passengers hurried along.

"There, your honor, they have gone now. Now about this service, your honor?" said the old woman, impatiently.

"Well, it is no hanging matter, nor anything of the sort. But it is a secret service for all that," replied Everage.

"A secret service, your honor's worship! Ah, that is what my heart delights in! Ah, then, I have done more than one secret service for gentlemen of the highest rank! aye, and for ladies too, bless them! and got well paid for them besides! enough money to have kept me in clover all my life, only it always got stole from me by the wretches in the house."

"Well, you must take better care of the money which I shall pay you. But what was the nature of these secret services of which you speak."

"Ah, your honor's worship, if I were to tell you that they wouldn't be a secret any longer, and neither would you trust such an old blabber as me with *your* secrets," said the old woman, leering wickedly.

"That is so," said Everage; "and, besides, this is no place for carrying on a private conversation. Here comes another group of people quite close."

The group came and passed.

"Now, then, Mother Rooter, tell me where you live, if you have no objection, and whether I can find you at home if I come to you this evening, so that we may arrange this affair," said Everage, as soon as the coast was again clear.

"Is it where I live your honor asks me? That's a good 'un! Do you call it living? this life I lead. No, your honor, it is not living, it is lingering."

"Where, then, do you linger?"

"Well, then, sir, I draws my breath and stretches my bones in the back attic of No. 9 Blood Alley, Burke Lane, Black Street, Blackfriars Road. All B's, your honor. You can remember it by that. The house is Number Nine. They keep a bone and grease shop in the cellar, and rags and bottles on the first floor, and all the rest of the house is let to lodgers, all poor, but I the the poorest, your worship."

"And shall I come to you there?"

"If your worship will do me the honor."

"But the house, which seems from your description to be a tenement house of the worst order——"

"Aye, you may say that, your worship," interrupted the old woman; "but what is a poor body to do?"

"I was about to observe that the house would be full,

crowded, so much so that perhaps even your own back attic has other tenants."

"And so it has, your honor's worship."

"In which case I do not see how I am to have an opportunity of speaking to you in private there more than here."

"Oh, dear gentleman, if you come at nine o'clock, you'll catch me alone. Sure they'll all be out then on their tramps, and they won't be in much before morning. And sure your honor's worship might even trust them, seeing as they're all my own family, and would be fast as fast and safe as safe in any secret service as I might undertake. And your honor knows best whether you mightn't want their aid too, in sommut where they might be of use. I don't know yet what your service is, your honor. You haven't told me yet. But I know I am an ole 'oman, your honor's worship, and might want help, in case the service might require strength, like the breaking into a house and the bringing off of a dockerment or a young lady."

"It is none of these things, as you might have judged, else I should not have come. Yet it is akin to one supposition that you have advanced; and you really may want help. Who are the people that share your attic room and your confidence? But, hush! here come some of the other passengers; wait till they have gone."

The two conspirators were silent for a moment, and then, when they had their corner to themselves again, Everage repeated his question, and the old woman answered:

"Who are they? you ask me, sir. Well, there is, first of all, my two brothers, as honest, trusty lads——"

"'As ever scuttled ship, or cut a throat,'" suggested Everage.

"Yes, that they are, sir; and so you'll find them," said the old woman, who did not understand, or, perhaps, did not distinctly hear the quotation,—"honest and trusty, and true and good."

"Although they knock your head about?" observed Everage, who had not forgotten that piece of news.

"Oh, your worship, that was drink; it wasn't to say *them*."

"Ay! 'when the wine's in the wit's out,' I suppose."

"Just so, your honor; though it's precious little wine they gets, poor souls. It's most in general beer, or, if they're in luck, gin."

"Aye, to be sure! Well, if they serve me faithfully, they and you shall be kept in gin the rest of your lives."

"Oh, your honor's worship's reverence, that would be heavenly," exclaimed Mrs. Rooter, with enthusiasm. "They'll be true to you, sir—they'll be true to you till death do you part, and arterwards, sir! *and arterwards;* for I never could see the good of being true till death and then turning false to you arter you're dead, or arter they are."

"No, to be sure. But about these brothers of yours,—are they the only persons, or are there any others who share your attic?"

"Well, yes, sir; there's my grand-darter Meg, as honest and truthful a gal as ever——"

"Picked a pocket, or told a falsehood."

"No, sir, she don't, nor she wouldn't do nyther the one nor yet the other—not even in the way of business, as many an honest tradesman do."

"But that's rather hard on the honest tradesman, is it not?" smiled Everage.

"Gurr-r-r!" exclaimed the old woman, grinning and showing her snags of teeth. "Gurr-r-r! They hunt us poor creatures away from their shops and stalls, accusing of us of prowling about to see what we can pick up, when all they theirselves is a doing of the gentlefolks to no end! Don't tell me!"

"But about this girl? Is she—your granddaughter—and her uncles, the only inmates of your attic chamber?"

"Yes, your honor, the onliest ones, and quite to be depended on."

"Very well, then, I will look in at your place at nine o'clock this evening."

"And much good may it do your honor and us, too. The Lord bless you, sir. But mind and don't forget, your honor's reverence, the four B's and Number Nine."

"I will not forget. I have it down in my note-book."

And then, as another bevy of foot-passengers came hurrying along the sidewalk, Everage left the crone and went on his way.

At a few minutes past eight, Clarence Everage found himself prowling down Blackfriars' Road in search of a street that I have called Black street; but which, in fact, is very unfavorably known to the police under another name.

He found it at length; and looking down its cavernous mouth, he thought of Doré's picture of the entrance to the infernal regions.

He shuddered as he turned into Black street, and followed its windings down into a labyrinth of dark and lurid lanes and alleys, from which sunlight and fresh air must have been almost totally excluded, even at noonday.

Here every sense and sentiment was shocked and revolted. The streets were narrow and murky, muddy and filthy. The houses were old and shattered, and bent forward towards each other till the eaves of the roofs almost met overhead, shutting out much of the light and the air that might have visited the accursed place. The sides of the houses were disfigured by broken and stained window sashes filled up with old rags and hats, and by foul and dilapidated doorways, occupied, for the most part, by rum-stupefied men and women, and by neglected and drowsy children. Those groups were generally in semi-obscurity but here and there a street lamp from without, or a dim candle from within, lighted up their misery.

"Heavens and earth!" thought Everage, holding his handkerchief to his mouth and nose as he threaded his way through the mazes of this Gehenna in search of Blood Ally and Burke Lane, "these must be the waste pipes of all London's crime, disease and miseries; and yes, by my life, this is the sink!" he added, stopping in the very center of the labyrinth before Number Nine.

The house was taller, older, dirtier, and more dilapidated than any he had yet seen. It leaned forward as if ambitious of meeting and saluting its leaning opposite neighbor, and it looked as if it were in danger of toppling down in the attempt.

Here also the doorway was foul and broken, and crowded with drunken and dirty men and women.

Everage inquired of this group if this was Number Nine, and if Mother Rooter lived here.

They stared at him for a minute without replying, and

then all burst out laughing, while one woman called to some one within the passage:

"Hallo, Meg, come here! Here's a gentleman a-wanting of Mistress Rooter. He have come with the queen's compliments to her."

A brown-skinned, black-haired, bare-legged gipsy of about fourteen years old came out of the obscurity, and accosted Everage.

"Be thou the gentleman as grannam was a-looking for?"

"If your grandam is Mrs. Rooter,—yes," answered Everage scrutinizing the girl, and recognizing her from the description given by the crone.

"Come along then," said Meg, leading the way through passages and up staircases more foul and nauseating to sight and smell than even the middle of the streets had been—for the streets do sometimes get washed off by rain, whereas these tenement-house passages seem never to have that advantage.

Everage followed his guide up four flights of stairs, noticing, as he passed along the halls of each floor, through the open or half-open doors, heart-sickening and revolting sights of vice and misery within the room.

At the top of the last flight of stairs himself and his young guide reached the attic landing.

She beckoned and led him to a door, which she opened.

He followed her into a back room, with a low, sloping ceiling. It was wretchedly furnished, or rather bare of furniture,—a bed which was a mere heap of foul rags, a shaky little wooden table, a rickety chair, a rusty iron kettle, and a cracked tea-cup and saucer were the only means and appliances of comfort or necessity there.

The only person in the room was old Mother Rooter, who was squatted on the only chair, with her elbows on her knees and her head in her hands.

She got up to meet her visitor, and gave him her chair, saying:

"You are very welcome to my poor place, kind gentleman. Sit down, sir."

And she seated herself on the side of the bed, that he might not hesitate to take the chair.

He looked at the proffered seat, and took from his

pocket a newspaper, and spread over the bottom of the chair before sitting down on it.

"Ah, sir, I see—you gentlefolks blame us a deal for being dirty, but how can we help it? We can't get bread enough to eat; and where are we to get the extra penny to buy a bit of soap to wash ourselves and our houses, or the horn-comb to red up our hair, not to say the sixpence to buy a broom. Ah, sir, you gentlefolks should know what you are a-talking on before you blame us, poor creatures, for dirt."

"I am not blaming you," said Everage.

And then, to change the subject, he remarked:

"You are very high up here; you are high up in the world in one sense, if you are not in another."

"Ah, yes, sir! but what am I to do? The garret or the cellar is the choice us poor creatures has to make. All the house between them is too dear for the likes of us. And be the same token, there's little to choose atween them. It's hard on an ole 'oman like me to live up here; and when, of an evening, I'm a-panting up all these stairs,—sir, there's ninety on 'em,—steps, I mean—I know it to my sorrow, for I have counted on 'em often, as I panted up 'em, and stopped on every landing to catch my breath,—well, sir, I often think it would be better to live in a cellar. But then, I thinks, as once I *did* live in a cellar and catch the rheumatism by it. So on the whole, I says to myself, it is better to climb and to pant nor to lie flat on my back and groan."

"And your choice was a very wise one. But listen: if you are faithful to me in the service you have undertaken to perform, you shall live in a first-floor front of any such a house as this, until I shall be better able to provide for you—which I certainly shall be, if you should be successful and faithful."

"Bless your honor! I will be faithful as faithful. But you haven't told me yet what the service is a-going to be."

"I came here to-night to tell you, and I will tell you now—but, is the coast clear?" anxiously inquired Everage, looking around and seeing that the girl, Meg, at least had disappeared, and that himself and the crone were alone or seemed to be so.

"Yes," answered Mrs. Rooter, "the coast is clear.

My brothers have not left the house though, because I hinted to 'em as they might light upon a job."

"Where are they, then?"

"Up on the leads. I sent them there to wait your honor's pleasure. And there they shall stay till your honor bids me call them down. If so be you would rather trust the business to me alone, I will, if I can, do it alone and they shall never know anything of it; but if your honor chooses to trust 'em, which I make bold to say—they are just trusty as trusty—why I'll go call them."

"Go and call them—I will take a look at them, at all events," said Everage.

The beldam went out into the passage, and climbed a ladder leading to the open trap-door of the roof, and summoned her brothers; and presently their heavy steps came lumbering down the ladder; and she brought them into the presence of Everage.

They were two ill-looking fellows enough, somewhere between forty and fifty years of age.

The elder was tall, sallow, black-haired and black-eyed.

The younger was short and thick-set, with broad shoulders, bull neck and bullet head covered with a thick shock of red hair.

Both men were in rags.

They came and stood before Everage and pulled their forelocks by way of salutation.

"Well, my men, are you to be trusted in a service the faithful performance of which will accrue to your own profit?" inquired Everage, as he scanned his "tools."

Now the only ideas the ruffians gained from this speech was that there were secret services required, for which money was to be paid. So one of them, the dark one, replied:

"What we undertakes to do, your honor, that we does faithful. But it depends on what the service is, and how it pays, whether we undertakes it."

"But if we undertakes it, we performs it faithful," added the other, the red one.

"Then, Mother Rooter, secure the door; and now all gather around me. You two men, and you, mother, sit

upon the bedside, and bend close to me as I sit upon the chair before you."

The three arranged themselves as their employer directed.

Then he, stooping towards them, and they towards him, so that all their mischief-brewing heads were together, began in a low whisper to unfold his plans. He came immediately to the point.

"It is a child to be carried off," he said, and then waited for the effect of his words. He saw that they were rather stunning even to these reckless villains.

"A child to be carried off, your honor! that's not over easy nor yet over safe," said the dark ruffian.

"Nor are you ever paid handsomely for jobs that are over easy and over safe! But I can tell you one thing—it is not over difficult nor over dangerous."

"Is it from a house, your honor?" inquired the dark ruffian.

"No, from the streets."

"Carry off a child from the crowded streets of London, your honor? That seems to be impossible," put in the red ruffian.

"Hold your tongue, Roger," said his black brother.

"Now, don't go quarrel before the gentleman! Manners is manners. If so be, you're decent men, behave as sich!" put in the crone.

"I only said it was impossible to carry off a child from the streets of London; and I'll not deceive the gentleman. I'll stick to it, as it is," persisted Red Roger, who was called thus by his "pals."

"You will find that it is very easy. I have studied it out and matured a plan that must be perfectly successful."

"Let us hear it, your honor," said the black one.

"Well, listen," whispered Everage, in a very low voice. "This child is about two years and a half old. He is the child of foreign parents who know not much of English life. He is sent out with his nurse, a black girl who wears a plaid turban instead of a bonnet; you may know her by that. He is sent out with this girl morning and evening of every fair day. She is a fool, and she takes him about Trafalgar square and up and down the street, and

to St. Mary le Strand and along Fleet Street. And they stop and gaze in the shop windows, and stand with the crowd around every organ-grinder and monkey, and especially around every Punch and Judy. This is my plan. I will take an opportunity to point out the nurse and child to Mother Rooter. She can afterwards point them out to you. Once having seen them, you cannot possibly mistake them. Are you attending to me?"

"With all our ears, sir," answered the black villain, while the red one nodded emphatically.

"Then listen! when you have once seen this nurse and child, you must watch for them, and arrange something like this manœuvre between you: One must be the abductor, the other must be the assistant. The one who is to carry off the child must have in his pocket a bottle of chloroform. Do you know what that is?"

"Don't we, sir? It has saved the slitting of many a windpipe!" chuckled the red wretch.

"Very well. Let the one who is to carry off the child take a bottle of chloroform, which I will provide; also a dark shawl. Then watch until you see the child and nurse standing in some crowd around a street show. Then, the abductor must keep very near the child, having the shawl and the chloroform at hand. The assistant may then go farther up or down the street and at the right moment raise the hue and cry of 'Stop thief!' and lead the chase up or down the street towards the crowd in which the child stands. Then let him who is to carry off the child uncork his chloroform and have it ready, snatch up the child, throw the shawl quickly over his head, and run with the rest, shouting 'Stop thief!' at the top of his voice; but all the time letting the fumes of the chloroform escape within the folds of the shawl, so as to overpower the child and render him incapable of struggling or calling out."

"But it might kill the baby, and that would be murder and we don't want nothink to do with sich at no price," objected the black scamp.

"Do you think, Bill, as the gentleman would ax us to do murder? I don't. True, there might be a accident from chloroform, as there often bees to the 'ospitals, but that wouldn't be murder," said Red Roger.

"You'd find as the jury would bring it in murder," answered Black Bill.

"There is no sort of danger. I will only put enough of the stuff in the bottle to quiet the child, and not enough even to make him insensible. Besides am I not as responsible for the thing as you are?"

"Well, your honor knows best!" said the black scamp.

"And now let me go on. As soon as the child is quiet, leave the rushing crowd that your brother is still leading with his cry of 'stop thief;' leave it leisurely, and take the nearest cut for Blackfriars' Road and your mother's, no, sister's room, here. Here you may conceal him until I can take him off your hands. Do you understand this?"

"Yes, your honor. But now, how about the pay?"

"You shall have five pounds each down, as soon as I see the child in your hands. You shall have all the jewelry that you find on his person, which, as I have seen pearls and turquoise among them, may amount to as much more, or twice as much more. And finally, when I shall reap the advantage that I expect from this child's disappearance, you shall have a comfortable income from me for the rest of your lives."

The men wrangled and haggled with their employer for a higher price for their crime, and after much dispute obtained their own terms—ten pounds each down and a crown a week for keeping the child.

After this, Everage left the house, promising to see Mother Rooter at her stall the next day and every day, until he should have a chance of pointing out the boy and nurse to her, that she might afterwards show them to her brothers.

Everage kept his word, and the next morning stopped on his way to his school, to leave a bottle of chloroform on Mother Rooter's stand, and to watch for the possible appearance of little Lenny and his nurse, on their morning walk.

The demon helped Everage to wonderful luck, for presently came Pina leading little Lenny, by the hand.

They passed quite close to where the crone squatted and Everage stood. They seemed to be going up Fleet street, upon some little shopping errand.

Everage turned his back upon them until they had

passed and had their backs to him. Then he touched the beldam and pointed them out to her.

"There they are. Shall you know them again?"

"Why, I'd know 'em among a hundred! That black gal, with the plaid turban on her head, isn't easy forgot, nor yet the beautiful boy, with all that finery about him! which it's a world's wonder I never noticed of 'em before!" said the beldam.

"You would not have noticed them now, perhaps, if I hadn't pointed them out."

"Well, maybe not, to be sure. I don't commonly look after children and nursemaids."

"But you will remember them now, and take the first opportunity of pointing them out to your brothers."

"I'll bet you! Beg your honor's pardon. One or t'other on 'em will be here morning and evening until I gets a chance to show 'em. And be the same token, here comes Bill now."

"So he does; well, keep him here till the nurse and child return; they will have to come back this way; and then you can point them out to him. And now my time is up," said the poor gentleman, looking at his gold repeater, a family heirloom, the sole relic of better days that had not yet been dedicated to the necessities of his wife and children; but was destined soon to be sacrificed to raise money to pay the instruments of his meditated crime.

Everage then hurried away to his school duties, leaving the beldam and her accomplice to carry out his instructions.

As you, of course, already know, the plot was accomplished.

Little Lenny was carried off in the manner planned by Everage; and afterwards described by Pina.

He was a brave little fellow, and when he saw a great crowd of people rushing on and crying, "Stop thief;" and when he felt himself caught up in the arms of a strange man, and hurried along with the rest, he only supposed some frolic was afoot, and he laughed and shouted, "Top Teef!" with all the strength of his baby lungs.

But soon the fumes of the chloroform overpowered him, and his head dropped on the shoulder of his captor.

Black Bill, keeping the old shawl over the child, taking his way through the darkened streets and lanes, at length bore his prize safely to Number Nine, Blood Alley.

He hurried up-stairs to the attic room and placed the still unconscious child in the arms of the beldam, who was there seated in her only chair.

"There, Peg! uncover him quick and do some'at to bring the life back to him," said Black Bill, a little nervously, as he himself with eager hands helped to relieve the boy of the shawl.

"Meg!" called the crone to her granddaughter, "fetch a cup of water here. Bill, run and fetch a little rum."

Meg, who was idling about the place, ran and fetched a cup of water from the nearest room-neighbor.

Mother Rooter dipped her fingers in the cup and sprinkled it in the boy's face. The air had already half revived him, and the water completed the work. With a gasp and a sneeze the little fellow awoke.

They gathered around him, those wretches, like a pack of wolves around a lamb.

One tore off his pearl and turquoise necklace; another seized his hat and feather; another his sash; another his jeweled armlets. What a prize!

CHAPTER XXXII.

LITTLE LENNY'S ADVENTURES.

Oh! 'tis a peerless boy,
Fearless, ingenuous, courteous, capable:
He's all the mother's, from the top to toe.—SHAKESPEARE.

WAS little Lenny frightened when he woke up and found himself in that strange and wretched garret, closely surrounded by new and terrible faces?

Not at all. Neither by nature nor by training was the baby-boy a coward. The child of many generations of heroes had inherited no craven fears; the cherished darling of the household had been taught none.

In a word, he was a plucky little fellow, afraid of neither man, beast or devil.

And there was still another reason why on this occasion he was not afraid. For if, as it has been written by the prince of poets, "*music* hath charms to soothe the savage breast," how much more hath beautiful and gracious childhood?

The wretched men and women, gathered around this pretty boy, looked on him, not with ferocious faces, but with smiles; and not with the deceitful smiles whose insincerity a child will detect more quickly than an adult can, but real, heartfelt smiles, called up by seeing among them "something better than they had known."

Yes, even while they were wresting from him his little treasures of finery and jewelry, they did it with an expression of eagerness rather than of ferocity.

And little Lenny gazed on them, turning his blue eyes from one to another, not in fear, but in wonder and curiosity. Sometimes he was so much amused by their excitement that he laughed aloud.

But he was as a little prince, king, or god among these poor creatures, and he knew it. For when Red Roger unclasped and snatched his elegant pearl and turquoise necklace from his neck, he suddenly put out his chubby hand and snatched it back—so suddenly and unexpectedly that he actually gained possession of it again before the slow and lumbering brute could prevent him. And after he did so he fixed his eyes indignantly upon the thief, and said:

"Man! how dare you tate 'hings 'out leave?"

And it was delicious to see the air of authority and confidence with which the baby-boy put this question.

And why not? Had he not been permitted to rule over his mother and cousins, and even over his godfather, the veteran General, who was the greatest man *he* knew in the world? and should he not rule over these poor creatures? And besides, I think that Master Leonard Lyon, while inheriting all the graces and virtues of his ancient house, inherited some of its faults as well, and among the latter that inordinate pride of caste which is so very objectionable in this republican age, and that he looked upon this order of human creatures as rather lower in the scale of being than well-bred cattle, So, captive and helpless as he was, he looked around upon them

with queerly mixed feelings of wonder, mirth, pity and disapprobation, but without a particle of fear.

As for the red-haired ruffian, he was so astonished by the words and actions of the baby-boy, that he could but open his mouth and eyes and stare. He did not attempt to recover the necklace; but of course he knew that the child and his jewels were both in his power all the same.

Lenny, after staring at him for a moment and receiving no answer to his unanswerable question, turned to the gipsy-looking girl and asked:

"What you name, dirl?"

"Meg," answered the girl, smiling kindly on the child.

"Met, you tate dis and teep it for Lenny. Me name Lenny," he said, handing her the necklace.

Meg looked up in doubt and fear to the face of her red-haired relative, and meeting his eye, and seeing him nod and wink at her, she slipped the necklace into her bosom, and answered the child, calling herself by the name he had given her:

"Yes, pretty! Met will keep it for Lenny. (Yes, and I will, too, if I can,") she added, in a lower tone. But she probably knew also that the jewels must pass back into the custody of the red-haired ruffian before the night should be over.

But Lenny's attention was instantly called away to another quarter. In fact, he needed to be constantly on the alert to prevent himself from being stripped and skinned by the thieves.

"You 'top, *man!*" he indignantly exclaimed to Black Bill, who was stealing the pearl and turquoise armlets from his sleeve. "Div Lenny back, minute!" he cried, making a snatch at the jewels.

Black Bill probably felt safe in relinquishing his prizes, for the time being; for as soon as he restored them to Lenny, the child passed them over to the appointed keeper of the jewels, saying:

"Met, teep dem too for Lenny."

And the girl, with a smile, put them also in her bosom.

But presently this chosen servant seemed turning traitor to her little lord, for while his attention was for a moment called off elsewhere, he felt hands at work upon his pretty little blue kid gaiters, with their gold buttons.

"'Top dat, *Met!* 'Top it, *Met!* What you pull off my hoos for? Me not do bed. 'Top it, *Met!*" he cried, this time less in anger than in anguish to see such treachery in a trusted servant.

"Oh! I want 'em so bad! so bad! Won't you give 'em to me? Won't Lenny give 'em to Met?" pleaded the girl, in a wheedling tone.

"You want my hoos?" inquired Lenny, pitifully.

"Yes, so bad! I have got no shoes."

"You dot no hoos?"

"No."

"Well, den, me div you mine. Tate off! tate off! Me dot more hoos home."

The girl took them off. And this must be said in excuse for her, that she was acting under the orders and under the eyes of her tyrannical and unscrupulous uncles.

"Now put on *you* feet! Put on! put on!" insisted Lenny, stooping over and looking at Meg's sturdy naked limbs. "But my hoos too ittle for you feet. You feet so bid," he added, in astonishment, at the size of Meg's "understanding."

"Never mind, I can change 'em for a bigger pair," answered the girl.

Before Lenny could reply again, he was accosted by the beldam, who held him on her lap and who had got possession of his elegant little white satin hat, with its plume of white marabout feathers fastened with a cluster of diamonds.

"And may I have this, my pretty, pretty bird?" she asked, holding it up to view.

"You dot no bonnet?" he inquired compassionately.

"No, my pretty little angel, I've got no bonnet."

"Den you have Lenny hat—Doosa div Lenny more hat. Put on, put on!" he exclaimed, impatiently seizing his beautiful and costly cap, and trying to decorate with it the horrible head of the old hag.

He was permitted to complete his purpose, to the unbounded mirth of the group who all burst into loud laughter at the ludicrous effect produced.

When this ebullition had somewhat subsided, Lenny bestowed his sash upon Meg, his tiny pocket-handker-

chief on one man, and his little gloves on another; and then he said, with an air of relief:

"Now, dat all—Lenny dot no more div! Now Lenny want do home see Doosa."

He said this with so much confidence, yet with so much uneasiness and longing that they all pitied him. The old woman asked:

"Who is Doosa, my little angel?"

"Doosa id Doosa—Lenny Doosa—Lenny pretty Mamma Doosa."

"His mother," said one of the men, in a low voice.

And then, for a few moments, nobody knew what to say.

Lenny was the first to speak:

"Tate me home now see Doosa. Met, I do 'id you—you tate me."

Meg was confounded for a few moments, and then her mother-wit came to her aid, and she answered:

"But Doosa is coming here herself to take Lenny home."

"Doosa tome here, tate Lenny home?"

"Yes, and Lenny must be a good boy till Doosa comes."

"Doosa say so?"

"Yes, Doosa say so."

"Den Lenny will—" he said, gaping, and adding:

"Lenny so sleepy! me so sleepy!"

"Well, then, lay on its old grannam breast, and go to sleep, my little angel," said the old woman, gathering him up to her bosom.

"No, no, no, no! lay on Met lap. Met dit Lenny seep," he said, wriggling himself away from the crone, and going up to Meg.

What girl does not doat on little children? What girl, under these circumstances, would not have met the baby's advances with delight?

The poor young daughter of thieves and beggars took the child up in her arms and looked around for a seat.

"Well, then, if you have got to nurse him, I will give you my chair," said the old woman, rising and throwing herself down upon the bed.

Meg took the seat and arranged the drowsy child comfortably on her lap.

"Wock me! wock me, Met," sa' ' little Lenny.

There were no rockers on the rickety chair, but Meg moved her body backwards and forwards, and so gave the baby the best rocking she could.

"Now sin' to me, Met."

Meg looked perplexed at this request, for a moment, but soon recovered herself. Fortunately, Mother Goose's melodies are the common property of infant humanity, from the royal palace to the rag-picker's hut, and Meg struck up the nursery-classic—

"By, Baby-Bunting!"

She had a very sweet voice, which certainly soothed the child, for he listened in drowsy delight. He well understood that he himself was the Baby-Bunting in question. But when she sang the next line:

"Popper's gone a-hunting."

He opened his sleepy eyes and said:

"No, no; me dot no popper!"

"Never mind; some Baby-Buntings have—"

"Mommer's gone a-milking."

"No, no; Lenny mammer don't go miltin'! *Dane* do miltin', and *Mawy*, and *Suzy*—down home in tountry. And Lenny do wid 'em too—see milt tow," he exclaimed, quite waking up, as the memory of the rural pleasures of Old Lyon Hall flashed over his mind.

"Well, never mind; some mommers do, you know—

"Sister's gone a silking."

"Lenny ain't dot no sister—not one," he said.

"Brother's gone to get a skin
To wrap my Baby-Bunting in—
A pretty little rabbit skin,
To wrap my Baby-Bunting in."

"No, no, no; Lenny ain't dot no brudder. *Dit* do after yabbits," said Lenny, very drowsily.

He was almost asleep, and the girl continued her chant-

ing: but presently as his eyes were about closing, he suddenly started up:

"Met?"

"What does my pretty want?"

"When Doosa tomes, wate me up."

"Yes, that I will."

"Dood night, Met!"

"Good night, little angel!"

"Tiss me first, Met; tiss Lenny dood-night, Met!"

The girl stooped and kissed the child almost passionately, and murmured:

"Who could hurt him, the darling?"

But Lenny's eyelids were weighed down with sleep, and he was almost gone again, when, once more he called:

"Met, I fordot to say my p'ayers. Hear me say my p'ayers, Met!"

And heavy with sleep as he was, he slipped off her lap, knelt down at her knee, and folded his little hands, and bowed his little head, and opened his baby-mouth, in "the simplest form of words that infant-lips can try:"

"Now I 'ay me down to s'eep,
P'ay de Lord my soul to teep;
If I die before I wate,
P'ay de Lord my soul to tate."

This was the little evening prayer that had been taught him, with much trouble, by his mother.

It was uttered now in a place and among people who had probably never heard a prayer before.

Yet, perhaps, no purer orisons from priest or prelate arose to the throne of the Most High that night.

"Now me done. Now me do s'eep," said Lenny, drowsily, climbing up to Meg's lap and putting his arms around her neck and nestling his head upon her bosom.

"Bless the darling!" said the girl, as she gathered him closer and supported him comfortably.

And again he was almost asleep, when again he started up and called out again:

"Met!"

"What is it now, my pretty?"

"Don't you fordet to wate me up when mamma Doosa tomes."

"No, I won't, my pretty."

"Now I do s'eep, sure 'nough. Dood night, Met."

"Good night, little angel."

"More tiss."

She stooped and pressed her lips to his baby lips again. He opened his drowsy eyes to look at her and say:

"Lenny love Met." And with the words in his mouth he fell fast asleep.

And Meg continued to rock him with a gentle motion and sing to him in a soothing tone.

Meanwhile the old woman lay resting on her bed, and the two men sat drinking at the rickety table.

"You'd better take them things to Old Israel and get 'em out'n the way in case of accident; and mind what he gives you for 'em. Them's rale jewels, if *I* know anythink about rale jewels," said the old woman from her bed.

"Which you don't. Not the least. But them's rale, sure enough; because it ain't possible as a rich lady, rolling in gold, would go for to put her onliest child into imitation trash," said Black Bill.

"Well then you had better go and make sure on 'em. There'll be a hue and cry next."

"There is a hue and a cry now, I shouldn't wonder; only it won't come down our way."

"Well, anyhow, why don't you go and take the things to the Jew?"

"Because we must wait here for the gentleman. I saw him on the Strand arter Bill carried off the child. He said he was coming to settle to-night," said Roger.

"One of you can stay here to see him and the other can go and sell the jewels."

"Not if we know it," laughed both the brothers, speaking at once.

"We want to stay here together to see the gentleman and get the money," said Red Roger.

"So we can have fair play and diwide it, equal, share and share alike," added Black Bill.

"And then we wants to go together to Israel's to sell the jewels and get the price," pursued Red Roger.

"So we can diwide the same fair and equal," added Black Bill.

By this it will seem that there was nò "honor among thieves" in this case. Neither would trust the other.

"Here he is now," said Roger as a step was heard upon the stairs.

A few moments after, there was a rap at the door.

Black Bill opened it and admitted Everage.

"You have got the child?" he eagerly demanded.

But before any one could reply, his eyes fell upon little Lenny sleeping on the girl Meg's lap.

"Yes, as your honor sees, we've got him fast enough," answered Roger.

Everage approached the sleeping child and gazed in his tranquil face.

"Did he cry much?" he inquired, in a subdued tone.

"Cry?" laughed Black Bill. "'Cry?'—Lord love you, sir, no! He thought it was a frolic, and he whooped 'stop thief' with the lustiest on 'em till the clooryfum quieted of him."

"But when he was brought here?"

"Oh, he was asleep then."

"Good Heaven!" exclaimed Everage, fairly jumping off his feet with fright, "has he been in that state ever since?"

"Lord bless your honor, no, sir! He woke up bright as a skylark the minute we flung water in his face."

"And *then* was he frightened? Did he cry for his mother?"

"Lord love you, no, sir! Never see such a plucky little cove. He scolded us men, and he petted Meg, and he put his precious little cap on the old woman's head. Such a figure it made of her—ha! ha! ha!—ho! ho! ho!" laughed both brothers.

"Then he was not terrified or distressed?"

"*He* terrified or distressed! You ought to have heard how he ordered us all around until he got sleepy, and then he insisted on Meg's rocking him to sleep. And she did it."

"Has he had his supper?"

"No, your honor. He didn't ask for no supper. Why, sir, his hands were full of buns when I snatched him up and run off with him," said Black Bill.

"But if he wakes up hungry, what have you got to give him?"

"Well, unless the poor woman has a bit of bread and a lump of cheese, I don't know as there's anything else."

"I thought so. I must go out and buy him some milk. Where can I find any hereabouts?"

"Well, sir, there's a shop at the corner of the next street where they sells it. But, master, how about the pay?"

"Oh, you shall have it," said Everage, taking out his old portmonnaie and drawing from its interior three ten pound notes, the price of his valuable jeweled gold watch and chain, his own seal ring, a costly microscope that had once been his delight, and other sacred treasures spared from sacrifice till now.

"I promised you ten pounds each, I think. Here they are." And he handed a note to each of his confederates.

"And now," he said, "I must go and get some milk for the child."

"I will go, your worship," said Roger.

"Very well. I shall thank you. Here is a sixpence," said Everage.

"If your honor pleases, I must buy a mug or summit to fetch it in."

"Here is another sixpence. And now make haste. I want to see the child comfortable before I leave him to-night."

"All right, your honor; I'll be back in no time," said Roger, starting out of the room.

"But—where are you going to lay him?" inquired Everage, glancing at the old woman's foul bed with a visible shudder.

"Oh, your honor, it's all right. He shall sleep with me," said the crone.

"No, I would rather he should not. Can't he sleep with the girl?"

"But she shares my bed, your honor."

"Have you no other bedding?" he inquired, glancing around the room.

"Lord love you, sir, where would the likes of us get it? No, your honor, you see all we have."

"Where do the men sleep?"

"La, sir, anywheres or nowheres! most in general no wheres! If so be they happen to be at home a night they just fling themselves down onto the floor."

"Well," sighed the poor gentleman, "I suppose there is no help for it to-night, and he must sleep as he can, but to-morrow I must get some clean bedding for his use. I wish you to take good care of the little fellow for the few hours or days he will be with you; but I must get him out of the country as soon as possible."

With Everage "as soon as possible" meant as soon as by any means he could raise the money to do so.

"If you please, sir——" began Meg, in a timid voice.

"Well, my girl, what is it?" inquired Everage, turning and looking at her, and thinking what a fine frank face was hers, notwithstanding that she was the child and companion of thieves and outcasts.

"If you please, sir, I would not lay him on that bed. He ain't hardened to it, and he could not sleep, sir. It is full of bugs," said Meg.

"But what's to be done? You can't hold him in your arms all night."

"'Deed I'd sooner do it, sir, than see him eat up alive. But please, sir, if so be I might make so bold——"

"Yes, yes, to be sure. Go on."

—"The shops is all open yet, sir, and if so be as you could send out and buy him a little clean blanket—a coarse one would do—I could make him a pallet in the corner of the room and cover him over with his own little mantle," said Meg.

"Well thought of, my girl. How much will it take to buy?" required Everage, for his funds were very, very low.

"A crown would do it—maybe less."

"Can you do this errand for me, my man?" inquired Everage, turning to Black Bill.

"If your honor wills; but it will take seven shillings at the least," said the ruffian.

Everage produced the required amount and handed it over to the man, who arose and lounged out of the room.

"And now I must not forget this," said Everage, picking up a bundle he had brought in with him, unrolling it, and displaying a full suit of baby's clothing, including the

night gown, all of the cheapest and plainest material, faded and patched, but perfectly clean : for it belonged to his own little two-year-old Clara, and had been privately taken from his wife's bureau drawer. "He must not remain in his fine clothes lest he should be accidentally seen. Put this night-gown on him to-night, and to-morrow dress him in this suit; and be sure to hide away or destroy the others. Do you understand?" he inquired, as he passed the bundle over to Meg.

"Yes, please, sir."

The door opened and the two brothers came in together —Black Bill, with a small, coarse, cradle-blanket on his arm; and Red Roger, with a mug in his hand.

Everage himself took the purchases from them, and gave them into the keeping of the girl, whom he trusted more than all the rest of the gang.

Then he waited until he saw Meg undress the child and put it in his clean, patched nightgown, while little Lenny slept heavily the sleep of fatigue through the whole process.

"Now, if you will hold him on your knees half a minute, I'll spread his pallet," said the girl, laying the child on the lap of Everage.

As soon as his pallet was prepared, she took him, still sleeping, and laid him on it, covering him over with his own little mantle.

"And you'd better keep the milk handy so as to give it to him to drink if he should wake hungry or thirsty," said Everage.

"Yes, sir, I will. I will just fling myself down on the floor by his pallet, and take care of him, sir," replied Meg.

"And you shall not go unrewarded for your care of him," said the poor gentleman loftily.

And then, having given his confederates an extra caution in regard to the child, and promised, or rather threatened, to look in the next night, Everage left the house and bent his steps homeward.

Surely little Lenny's guardian angel inspired poor Meg that night. She laid herself down on the bare boards beside his pallet, and resting her head upon her bent arm, with her face towards the child, watched him until she became too drowsy to keep her eyes open; and even then

she slept like a watch dog, on the alert, and at the slightest motion of her charge she would wake up to see if he wanted water, or milk, or to spread the mantle over him.

But Lenny slept soundly until morning.

At his usual time of waking, a little after sunrise, he opened his eyes. At first he stared around himself in utter bewilderment. Then he saw Meg bending over him, and he recognized her face, and he remembered the incidents of the preceding night.

"Why didn't you, Met?" he inquired, looking reproachfully in her face.

"Why didn't I do what, my pretty?" smiled the girl.

"Wate me up when Doosa tomed."

"But Doosa didn't come, my pretty bird."

"Doosa didn't tome?"

"No, pretty."

"But Doosa say she tome."

"So she did; but then she said she couldn't, and now she says she will come to-day."

"Tome to-day?"

"Yes."

"Tome soon?"

"Yes."

Lenny smiled, and then all out of season, he remembered a certain matutinal formula that he had forgotten under his unusual circumstances, and he suddenly said:

"Dood mornin,' Met!"

Meg, taken all aback by this unexpected salutation, did not respond.

"Dood mornin', Met. Why don't you say dood mornin' to me?"

"Good morning, pretty bird."

"Me not pretty bird—me 'ittle boy."

"Good morning, little boy."

"Tiss dood mornin', Met."

The girl caught him up in her arms and kissed him enthusiastically.

To her dark and gloomy life he had come like some beautiful, brilliant bird of Heaven, and she prized him and delighted in him. It was something of the same sort of natural passion that a child feels for its first wonderful wax doll, or its first beautiful live pet, only it was much

more intense, inasmuch as this was a living, loving talking doll—a beautiful, intelligent human pet.

And so she kissed him, and hugged him, and shook him, and danced him, and prattled to him, and called him all the sweet names that, on such cases, spring spontaneously to the lips of girls and women.

And Lenny, in his gracious, genial nature, gave kiss for kiss, and caress for caress.

I think if poor Drusilla, waking in her agony of bereavement, that same morning, could have seen, as in a magic glass, these two friends—the girl and the baby,—she would have been contented,—no, not that, but she would have felt comforted.

"Lenny love Met," said the child, patting her cheeks.

"And 'Met' loves Lenny dearly, dearly, dearly! and nobody shall hurt him—they shall kill 'Met' first!"

Now, as "hurt" and "kill" were words that had never been introduced into this cherished baby's vocabulary, he did not understand and did not know how to reply; but he felt that *love* was meant throughout, and he knew how to answer *that*. So he patted Meg's cheeks and kissed her lips.

And now as the long-lingering light of day stole into that wretched attic-chamber, it brought out strange pictures. The yellow rays of the sun, striking obliquely through the window in the roof, fell upon the corner occupied by Meg and Lenny, and lighted up a picturesque group,—the beautiful, golden-haired, blue-eyed baby-boy, fair as one of Rafael's pictured angels, with his rosy arms clasped around the neck of the wild, dark, gipsyish girl, who held him on her lap; and their surroundings,—the poor pallet, the little stone-jug of milk, the bare boards, and the broken walls. This was the only sunny scene in the room.

In the shadows were other scenes, best left in darkness, —the beldam in her foul bed, and the two men sprawling on the naked floor. All these were dead to all surrounding life, for they were heavily sleeping off the effects of the last night's gin-drinking.

To return to the "sunny" spot occupied by the girl and the baby. She was still caressing him.

"Would Lenny like his breakfast now?" she asked.

"Yes, Lenny like breakfas'. But go in baf-tub first."

"Go—where?" inquired the girl, quite bewildered.

"In baf-tub! baf-tub! baf-tub! wash!"

"Oh, bath-tub! My bonny bird, we have got no bath-tub here, but 'Met' will wash you clean—will she?"

"Yes, Met wash."

"Will Lenny be afraid to stay here while 'Met' goes to fetch water?"

"'Faid? what 'faid?"

"You don't know? Well, I hope you never will."

"What 'faid? what 'faid? what 'faid?" peremptorily demanded this despotic little inquisitor.

"'Faid is—bad, naughty," said Meg, after some little perplexity.

"No, Lenny not 'faid."

"And will Lenny let 'Met' go get some water?"

"Yes."

"And sit here and don't move until I come?"

"Yes."

Away ran the girl, and as quickly as she could borrow a bucket and fetch the water she returned to the room.

She washed the child very thoroughly and then dressed him in the clean suit that had been provided by Everage.

"But dese ain't Lenny tose," observed the child.

"No, Lenny has got no clean clothes here, so Lenny must wear these," said the girl.

And the child trusted her and was content with the answer.

"And now Lenny will have his breakfast?" she asked.

"Yes; and Met have *hers* too," answered the child.

The girl then went to the sleeping men and felt in their pockets. She knew very well that both had cheated their employer in the matter of the price of the milk and the blanket that they had been sent to buy on the previous night, and so she judged they must have the odd change they had swindled Everage out of still in their possession.

She was right. She found a sixpence in Roger's pocket and two shillings in Bill's. She replaced all the money except one of the shillings, which she confiscated to the use of the right owner, as she called little Lenny.

Having possessed herself of this fund, she turned to the child and took him by the hand, saying:

"Will Lenny take a walk with 'Met'?"

"Lenny want bekfas first."

"Well, we are going out to buy milk for breakfast—nice new milk. Will Lenny go?"

"Pose Doosa tome?" objected the child.

"But Doosa won't come before we get back."

"Well, den Lenny go wid Met."

And they walked out together down to the corner of the alley to the cellar where the milk was sold.

And Meg bought new milk and fresh rolls, and a little cheap white mug and plate, all for nine pence.

And then she took Lenny back to the attic and gave him his breakfast clean.

And through all this the beasts in the attic slept on.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

LENNY'S EXPERIENCES.

Oh! strange new world
That has such people in it!—SHAKESPEARE.

THE beldam was the first to awake. She looked at the child and asked if he had slept well, and if he had had anything to eat, and having received satisfactory answers, she set about preparing her own breakfast.

It was her daily custom, in returning home at evening to pick up and put into her wallet almost any sort of trash she might find about the streets; not only rags, but paper, straw, dry leaves, chips, sticks, and so forth.

Of these she now made just fire enough in the rusty grate to boil her kettle and make her tea.

And then she took from a small bundle a store of crusts and bones and broken victuals, all of which she arranged on the end of the rickety table; and so she made her morning meal.

"You may have what's left. And mind you take care of that child while I'm gone."

And with these orders, given of course to Meg, she put on her smashed bonnet and took her bundle of matches and went off to her usual haunts. And she did this, notwithstanding that she had received ten pounds the

night before. Such with her was the force of habit, or of rapacity.

After she had gone Meg made a meal of the fragments she had left, and washed it down with milk, now turned sour, that had been provided for Lenny on the preceding evening.

Then she cleared the table, and straightened the bed, and tidied the miserable room as well as she could.

All this time little Lenny was watching her gravely, and occasionally turning his eyes with solemn curiosity upon the sleeping men on the floor.

When Meg had got through her housework, even to the rolling up of little Lenny's pallet, she came back to the child and sought to amuse him with the ancient histories entitled "Red Riding Hood," "Goody Two Shoes," "Cinderella," "Jack the Giant Killer," and so forth.

And although of course Lenny had heard these venerable chronicles a hundred times before—as what child has not?—he was ready to listen to them a hundred times more—as what child is not?"

But at the end of every story he would ask:

"Met, why not Doosa tome?"

"Doosa will be sure to come, my pretty. Now let me tell you another story."

—"Tome soon?"

"Yes, she will come soon. Now let me tell you about Hop-O'-My-Thumb."

Lenny sighed.

Did you ever hear a baby sigh? It is the most pathetic sound in nature. Fortunately they don't often sigh; they generally prefer to scream.

Another story was told; and then a song was sung; and so with telling stories and singing songs, Meg tried to comfort and amuse the child.

But at last he said again:

"*Oh*, Met! *why* not Doosa tome? I want see Doosa, so bad." And his little lips began to tremble and his bosom to heave. But he had been taught that it was naughty to cry so he struggled valiantly to keep from doing so. But how could he bear hope deferred any better than his biggers?

His courage at last gave way and he burst out sobbing:

"I want to see Doosa! I want to see Doosa! I want to see Doosa so bad!"

Meg took him up in her arms and began to walk him up and down the room and sing to him; but his heart-breaking sobs arose above her song; and at last in despair she herself burst into tears and dropped down into her chair and hugged him to her heart, sobbing:

"Oh, my pretty, pretty boy, what can Meg do to comfort you? It was such a sin to take you from your mother!"

What a germ of a perfect gentleman little Lenny was!

As soon as he saw that his crying grieved his friend, he stopped short with a gasp or two, and put his arms around her neck, and laid his face to hers, and began to kiss and coax her.

"Don't ky, Met; Lenny so sorry mate Met ky! Don't ky, Met! Lenny be dood boy—'deed Lenny will. Let Lenny wipe eye."

And he took up the hem of his little frock, and tried to stretch it up to her eyes to dry her tears.

And she clasped him to her heart in almost hysterical passion, and kissed him, and shook him, and danced him until he laughed. And then a sort of tacit, but well understood, compromise took place between them—that one would not cry if the other did not, that is if either could help it.

It was long past noon when the men woke from their drunken sleep.

First Red Roger tumbled up from the floor, rubbed his eyes, stared about him, yawned, and sat down on the side of the bed to steady himself.

Then he got up, and walked across the room to where Meg sat with the child. He stared at him for a few moments, while little Lenny met the stare with unquailing eyes, and Meg trembled lest the ruffian should miss the shilling from his pocket; and then, saying:

"Keep that little fellow close, mind you!" he took himself off, greatly to Meg's relief.

Then Black Bill reared his lofty height from the boards, tottered on his feet, reeled towards the table, sat down upon it, for a few moments, to yawn and stretch his limbs, and then he went away.

These worthy gentlemen seldom breakfasted at home.

All that day, Meg had a hard time with little Lenny The poor girl told all the stories and sung all the songs she knew, and did her best to comfort and amuse him. And the baby-boy tried his best to be a little gentleman, and to keep his promise not to cry ; yet every little while, he would burst into heart-breaking sobs and tears, and cries, the burden of which was :

"I want to see Doosa ! I want to see Doosa so much ! "

At length, late in the afternoon, he succumbed to the influence of excitement, and fell asleep. And then Meg made his pallet with one hand, while she held him with the other, and laid him down.

Leaving him asleep, she went out and spent her last three-pence left of the shilling, and bought him a mug of milk and a penny-roll for his supper. These she brought home, and put away. And then she sat down to watch by the sleeping boy.

That evening Everage came in before the return of the others.

"I am glad I have found you alone, my girl," he said. 'I have brought a little money to buy some clean bedding for the boy, and I think I would rather trust you to spend it than another. Can you do it ? "

"Oh, yes, sir."

"It doesn't take much to buy cheap bedding for a baby and the cheaper you can get this the better, so it is clean. Here are ten shillings ; will that do ? "

"Yes, sir ; and if there's any over I will keep it to buy milk for him."

"Quite right. And now let me look at him," said Everage, going up and gazing on the sleeping child.

There was a tear resting on little Lenny's rosy cheeks, which Everage in his awakening remorse could not endure to see ; so he quickly turned away his head, and he asked Meg :

"Has the child cried much to-day ? "

"Oh yes, sir ; he has cried a great deal indeed for his mother."

"Poor child ! But he will soon forget her, and—he shall be taken care of. We will get him to the Highlands

after a while, and then he will grow into a sturdy mountaineer," said Everage to himself.

And soon after this he got up and went away

Later, the two men and the woman came in and drank themselves drunk, and then flung themselves down to sleep themselves sober. Little Lenny slept on in his pallet watched by Meg.

So passed the first day of the child's captivity.

On the second and third days the old crone abandoned her post at St. Mary's le Strand, and, hoping to make more by the beautiful boy, dressed him in rags, and telling him it was all for fun, and promising to take him to Drusilla, went out to beg with him.

But she carefully avoided the haunts where he or she had been seen, and took to other quarters of the city. On one of these begging excursions at the Railway Station, Lenny had recognized Dick and called to him, as has been related. But the beldam hastily covered the boy's head with a ragged shawl, plunged into the crowd and disappeared, leaving Dick bewildered.

On that night, when she took the child home to the miserable garret, she found Everage waiting there.

Everage was in a great panic. He told her that posters were out all over London advertising the loss of the child, describing his person and dress, and offering a large reward for his recovery. He assured her that, if the child were found in their possession, the whole lot of them would be sent to prison and to penal servitude, and enjoined them to keep him very closely in the attic until a favorable opportunity should occur of taking him out of the country.

He promised them further and greater rewards if they would faithfully follow his instructions; and having received their pledge to obey him, he left the house.

From this day Lenny was confined to the miserable attic and taken care of by Meg. She watched him by night, and tended him by day; she washed, dressed and fed him; she tried to amuse and console him; she sung all the songs she knew and told all the tales; and she wept when he cried, and she smiled when he laughed; and, though her nature was truthful, she told lots of lies to little Lenny to account for the non-appearance of

Doosa, promising every morning that Doosa would certainly come that day.

Little Lenny at first believed this; but daily disappointment at length disturbed his faith. And day by day he pined and pined, wailing in a tone of despair that nearly broke Meg's heart:

"No, no, no, Doosa not tome. *Doosa done away! Doosa done away!*"

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE PEACE-OFFERING.

"I give thee all
I can, no more."

Alexander Lyon arrived in London on the morning train, and in a pouring rain. He was pale and faint from his long illness and his fatiguing journey, but he was sustained by intense mental excitement.

His first thought, on leaving the train, was this:

How should he find his lost child in this boundless Babylon?

For the advertisement in the Times, of that morning, had already informed him that the baby-boy was still missing.

Sending on his valet with his luggage to Mivart's, he himself got into a cab and drove to the Morley House. Arrived there, he went into the reading-room to make inquiries, for the child might have been found, even after that last advertisement had been sent to the paper.

"Has the lost boy been found up to this morning?" he inquired of the bookkeeper or clerk of the house.

"No, sir,—nor ever will be, I fear; but here is Mr. Hammond—perhaps he can tell you more," answered that official.

Alexander turned, and found himself face to face with Dick.

They had parted in anger the last time they had spoken together; but now, for different reasons, both forgot that anger,—Alexander, in his recovered sanity and in his gratitude for Dick's services; and Dick himself in the

frankness of his heart and the compassion he felt for the sick and suffering man. Their hands met, and——

"Dick!"

"Alick!"

Were the first words they spoke.

"Has the child been heard of?"

"No," sighed Hammond.

"Come out, and walk with me; I wish to ask you about it."

"But it is pouring rain, and you have been ill. You are so still. Let us go into some unoccupied private parlor and have coffee ordered there. You will need it."

"Just as you please, Dick."

Hammond beckoned a waiter to show them to a private room: and, when they had reached it, he ordered breakfast for two to be brought there.

"Now tell me of *her*. How is she? How does she bear this heavy sorrow?" inquired Alexander, as soon as the waiter had left the room.

"Badly enough. She scarcely ever eats or sleeps. She is wasted to a shadow. She is dying—she will die, unless the child is restored," answered Dick.

"The child shall be restored, if he is above ground!" said Alick, bringing his fist down heavily upon the table.

Dick shook his head, and sighed.

"I tell you he shall. I arose from my death-bed to seek for him, and find him, and bring him to his mother—and I will do it!"

"Will you go to her and tell her that?" said Dick, solemnly.

"No, I will not. There is too much—too much to be forgiven me. I will not go near until I can place her child in her arms. And, Hammond, mind, this is a confidential interview—do not speak to her of it, or of me."

"Certainly not, if such is your wish."

"Does she pray now as she used to pray in all her troubles?"

"She does little else than pray; she does nothing else but pray and search for her child."

"*She* search?"

"Yes, she lives in a cab; has lived so ever since the child was lost."

"And does she believe that she will find him?"

"Yes. She believes that he is alive, and therefore to be found. It is her belief in that theory which keeps her alive through all the agony of suspense. If she thought he was dead she would die. I am sure of it."

"Keep up that faith in her heart, Dick. Lead her to believe also in the restitution of her child as an event that may occur any day, any hour, as you know it may."

Dick sighed heavily.

"But it may! And it shall! I, too, sinner that I am, have learned to pray. I pray daily, hourly, that I may be permitted to find the child and bring it as a peace offering to my dear, injured wife. And I shall do it. I feel sure that I shall."

"Heaven grant that you may," sighed Dick; "but recollect that already everything has been done that experience, interest, energy, money, skill, can do."

"But not all that *despair* can do! Oh, Dick! I have so set my heart on finding this child and bringing him to his mother that I shall surely do it."

"The Lord send it."

"And therefore, Dick, I want you to prepare her to expect the child; or, rather, to believe it probable that he will soon be found; so that when I do bring him to her she may not die from a shock of joy."

"I will do as you request, Alick; but I shall have to act with great discretion in the matter."

"Certainly you will, and you can. Does she know anything about——" Alick hesitated to name the *affair of honor* of which he was now so heartily ashamed. "Does she know anything about——"

"Your illness in Jersey, or its cause?" said Dick, delicately coming to his help. "Of course not. We were not going to tell her anything to add to her troubles."

"You were right!—But what a heartless wretch she must think me, to be in town and to show no interest in the loss of my child!" exclaimed Alexander.

Dick could not help remembering that Drusilla had had quite cause enough to believe him a "heartless wretch" without this. But Dick was very good-natured, so he said:

"She knows that you were not in town. She went to

your hotel at once to apprize you of the loss of your child——"

"She did! Drusilla did that!" exclaimed Alexander, interrupting him.

"Yes, she did—within an hour after the discovery was made, and——"

"Bless her! bless her!" fervently ejaculated Alexander.

—"She was told that you had left town for Southampton. I think she received the impression that you had sailed for America."

"I am very glad of that. But is it not strange that she did not see that ill-natured paragraph in the papers referring to the——"

"Not at all. The paragraph in question was in but one day's issue, and that was the day she was in her greatest agony about her child; and besides, she never has looked at paper or book since her heavy loss. She has done nothing but pray and search, as I said before."

"Poor child! poor child! Dick, tell her nothing of me. I do not wish that she shall see me, or hear from me, until I bring her the child. But give my love and thanks to my uncle, and tell him what I am about. But here comes the waiter."

Breakfast was brought in and arranged upon the table, and the friends drew up to it.

Alexander ate nothing, but he drank down in quick succession about six cups of coffee; for "sorrow is dry," just as surely as if the drunkards had never said it was, and made it an excuse for more drinking.

Then Alexander got up from the table and said:

"I would like to meet you here every morning about this hour for a few minutes to compare notes. Would it be convenient or agreeable?"

"Certainly—both, Alick. I am entirely at your service. And God grant you success!"

Then Alexander took up his hat and gloves, saying:

"I am going to Police Head-Quarters first."

Dick laughed lugubriously.

"Alick," he said, "the detective police have been using their utmost skill to find the lost child. They have been hard at work for a month."

"I know it, but they work in a routine; they also have come to move in a groove. The thieves know the detectives' ways by this time and elude them. I shall go about the business in an original manner. Good-by, Dick. I thank you earnestly for all your patient forbearance and goodness to me. Help them to take care of my poor girl."

"Certainly I will. But, Alick! do you take care of *yourself*. It is very damp."

"Never fear. No one takes cold who has so much else to think about and do. Well, once more—good-by till to-morrow, Dick."

And the friends shook hands and parted.

Alexander threw himself into his cab, and drove off to Scotland Yard.

There he saw the chief of police, and had a long talk with him. Under the seal of confidence, he explained something of the circumstances of his marriage, his temporary estrangement from his wife, who bore his family name; and of his subsequent accession to the title and estate of Killcrichtoun—a title which, it appeared, his wife shrank from sharing until they should be reconciled. This, he said, he divulged that the chief might understand why it was that he took so deep an interest, and was willing to pay so high a reward, and give besides all his own time and attention for the recovery of the lost child.

These circumstances and all others he deemed necessary he explained to the chief, who, by the way, had heard it all before from Dick, although he did not deem it discreet to interrupt Lord Killcrichtoun's narrative by telling him so.

Alexander also made some suggestions as to the best manner of conducting the further search, that the chief declared to have been inspired

After leaving Scotland Yard, Alexander went to his apartments at Mivart's, where he found that his valet had unpacked and arranged his clothes and toilet apparatus, and had brought up the letters and papers that had accumulated for him during him absence.

He looked over his letters, but found nothing of great importance.

Then he sent for the clerk of the house and made in-

quiries as to who had called on him, or what had happened concerning him during the last month.

He heard in reply several things in which we are not interested, and one thing in which we are, rather—namely, the visit of two ladies, who inquired for him in connection with the missing child.

Of course he knew at once that the ladies referred to must have been Anna and Drusilla, and the child little Lenny.

He made very particular inquiries concerning these visitors merely because he liked to hear of Drusilla; and having learned all that the clerk had to tell, he thanked and dismissed him.

For the next eight days Alexander occupied himself by carrying into execution all the ingenious plans he had originated for finding the child; but as none of these plans succeeded, it is not necessary to detail them.

It was fated that the father should find the child when he was not looking for him, but when he was in the act of performing a piece of disinterested benevolence.

And this is how it came about:

Among other better thoughts that had visited Alexander on his bed of illness were certain reflections in connection with his distant relative—our poor gentleman. His mind dwelt much upon the poor usher and his half-famished family, and he reproved himself for his late strange, incomprehensible blindness, thoughtlessness and selfishness in regard to them.

"A wife and six children to be fed and clothed on sixty pounds a year! Good Heaven! how could I have been so preoccupied as not to think of this when I had the power to help them—I who fling away every day of my idle and worthless life as much as he gets for his hard work and usefulness a whole year. I ought to do something for him. I ought to have done it long ago. But the question is—what to do? He is as proud as Satan, and he would not take money."

After much reflection, Alexander hit upon a plan of helping the poor gentleman without hurting his pride. It was a plan that required some considerable sacrifice on Alexander's part; and when you hear of it I think you will say that it was generous, if not magnanimous.

On Alexander's arrival in London, and for the first eight days after that, he had been so occupied with the search for his child that he had almost forgotten his plans for the relief of poor Everage; but on this ninth day he opened his eyes in the morning with these thoughts:

"I have been here more than a week, and spent all my time, energy and ingenuity in the search, and I have not found my child yet."

And then he fell into profound reverie, in the midst of which some good angel whispered to his spirit:

"You have been here eight days, intent only upon finding your child and taking him to his mother as a peace offering, and all for your own happiness; and you have not once thought of the poor gentleman and his famishing family."

"No, I have not," said Alexander to himself, "when it would have required no more than fifteen minutes to have done it either. I will find time to see poor Everage to-day, and put him out of his misery."

And he kept his word.

He knew exactly where the Newton Institute was situated, and he knew the hour of the afternoon at which the boys were dismissed, and at that hour he walked towards the Institute to meet Everage as the latter should come out after his pupils. He met first a troop of boys, and afterwards saw *him* come creeping along. But oh! how changed since Alexander had last seen him! He was now pale, thin, haggard, and somewhat gray. His eyes were cast down, and his shoulders were bowed, and he crept along like an old man of eighty.

The truth is that the poor gentleman had mistaken his vocation—it was not that of a deep-dyed villain; he had no genius for crime, and moreover, he had no stomach for it; it did not agree with him; he could not digest it; it made him ill, and was like to kill him unless he could get it off his stomach, or—his conscience.

His passions, his poverty, and his temptations had drawn him on to a deed which, just as soon as it was done, filled his soul with a corroding remorse.

Of all who suffered from the abduction of little Lenny, Clarence Everage, the abductor, suffered the most. Every night he was drawn by some irresistible influence to look upon his little victim.

He was himself a very loving father, and he had a little girl of Lenny's age, who was his favorite child, named Clara, after himself; and when he saw poor Lenny fading in the close confinement of that dark, damp attic, and for the want of sunshine, and weeping and wailing for his mother, the sinner's remorse was intensified to agony. He let his own family suffer that he might bring a few dainties to little Lenny.

The other lodgers in the house, who had never had a glimpse of the baby-boy, but who knew that a child had been put to "mind" with Mother Rooter, and who saw this poor, shabby gentleman come every night to bring it "goodies," jumped to the natural conclusion that he was the father of the boy, whom for some reason or other he was keeping in concealment; and this supposition shut out the suspicion that little Lenny was the missing child whose loss was posted all over London. We who know the facts easily see the connection between the two sets of circumstances; but they who did not even suspect them, could see no such relations.

So deep was the remorse of poor Everage, that it not only dried up his blood, and wasted his flesh, and bowed his frame, and blanched his hair, but it drove him to the desperate determination to take the child and go to police head-quarters and give himself up as its abductor. And so fixed was his resolution that he was only waiting for his wife to get safely over her confinement, which was daily expected, before he should do this.

In this very frame of mind, and thinking of this very purpose, he came down the street to where Alexander was waiting for him.

"Poor soul!" thought Alick, as he gazed upon him, "he is ageing very fast. His cares are too much for him. Or, perhaps, he has been ill, or in some distress even greater than usual. I ought to have looked after him long ago. I will do it at once."

And Alick quickened his steps to overtake the poor gentleman, who, in his deep preoccupation of mind, had passed without even lifting his eyes from the ground.

Alexander quickly overtook him, and, lightly touching his arm, said:

"Everage?"

The poor gentleman started, turned around, and, seeing Alexander, looked aghast, as a criminal might at a constable.

"How do you do, Everage? I fear you have been ill," said Alick.

Everage shook in every limb, and said nothing.

"You *have* been ill, that is plain enough! Come—shall we hail a cab, and go to Véry's? It is *my* turn now, you remember," said Alick cheerfully.

But Everage continued to gaze at him aghast, until at length he got breath enough to gasp:

"Good Heaven, my lord, is it you?"

"Come, Everage; your nerves are all unstrung, and you're shocked to see me looking so like a ghost. Indeed, I had liked to have been one. But here I am, alive at least, and likely to get well. Come—shall it be Véry's?"

"No, no, no—not that!" groaned the poor gentleman.

"The green-turtle soup is prime; now shall we go to that place in the Exchange?"

"No, no, no, Lord Killcrichtoun! I can go nowhere to eat or to drink with you! I cannot! I cannot! Heaven have mercy on me! I am a lost soul."

"Why, what is the matter with you, Everage?"

"I am ill, ill, ill!"

"Your nervous system is broken down; life has been too hard with you, my friend! But come—I have news for you that will cheer you up! Let us drop into the nearest tavern, and get a private room, where we may converse confidentially,—here is the 'King's Head' near, shall we go there and have something comfortable?"

"No, no, no; I told you I would go nowhere to eat or drink with you, my lord!"

"Is your digestive apparatus so much out of order as all that? Well, then, if you don't go to eat and drink, we will go to talk. I tell you I have news for you—'you will hear of something to your advantage,' as the mysterious newspaper paragraphs say."

"Well, well, I will go with you, my lord; and perhaps I will tell you 'something to *your* advantage,'" he muttered, in a low tone.

So they went to the King's Head," and Alick called for a private parlor, where they sat down to talk.

"Everage," said Alick, gravely, "I have had a long and dangerous fit of illness, from which I have scarcely yet recovered."

"Indeed, my lord! I had not heard of it; but, really now I observe that you do not look well. I am sorry, my lord."

"Everage, you heard of the affair in which I was engaged? the——"

The word stuck in his throat; he would not utter it.

Everage looked puzzled for a moment.

"You know—the affair in which I was engaged in Jersey! the——"

"Oh, yes, certainly, my lord; I heard of the——"

And, in courtesy, the poor gentleman paused exactly where his friend had done.

"Well, Everage, I was severely wounded, and, in the illness that followed, I came nearer facing my Judge than I ever expected to do, without hearing my sentence. In the convalescence that followed, you may believe that I was brought to very serious reflection. Among other subjects, I thought of you, Everage, and took myself to task for not having done so before—nay, now, do not shrink and turn from me; I mean no such an impertinence as patronage to you, Everage. I would just as soon venture to patronize one of the royal princes. But I thought of a plan for improving the circumstances of your family, which even you might meet without detriment to your honest pride."

"Oh, Heaven! oh, Heaven, have mercy on me!" groaned the poor gentleman.

"Everage, you are exhausted; you really *must* have something," said Alick.

And he rang for a waiter, and ordered brandy; which was quickly brought.

Everage gulped a small glassful and then said:

"You thought of me—you thought of me on your sick-bed! You think of me still in your days of deep affliction! for you *cannot* have come to London without learning the loss of——"

Everage's voice broke down in sobs.

"My child? yes; I learned the loss from the newspapers—from the very first newspapers that fell into my hands

after I was convalescent. I have thought of little else since my arrival. For the last eight days, I have done nothing but devise and carry out plans for his recovery. But, this morning, I remembered you and your affairs, and reproached myself for forgetting them. So, now——"

"But, about your child,—how *can* you think of any one or of anything while he is missing?"

"Because I cherish a great faith that I shall soon find him. But about your affairs. I wish to speak of *them*," said Alick.

The poor gentleman waved his hand with a gesture of resignation and became silent.

"Everage, on that bed of illness and self-examination, I made many a retrospection of my past life, and many a resolution for my future one. Among my retrospections was a review of my motives in going to so much trouble and expense in establishing my claim to the Barony of Killcrichtoun, which I really did not want. I believe now that my only incentives to that action were idleness and *ennui*. I had nothing to do; and I was weary of my life. But having made the discovery of my descent from the old baron, I took some little interest in tracing back the lineage; and found some little excitement in following up the investigation and proving my claim. But as soon as all that was over and I found myself addressed on all sides as 'Lord Killcrichtoun,' 'your lordship,' and 'my lord,'—on my soul, Everage, I felt heartily ashamed of myself and title——"

"Yet it is an ancient and an honorable title," sighed the poor gentleman, and he thought—"He values it so lightly, this proud Virginian, while I—I have staked my soul upon the bare chance of some day gaining it!"

"Yes, it is an ancient and honorable title; and it would well become an English heir—it would well become yourself, Everage! And but for me you would have been the bearer of it."

"But for you, my lord, I should never have heard of my remote connection with it."

"Everage, my friend, will you do me the favor to leave out all reference to that title in speaking to me? To hear it so applied makes me feel like a fool and that is a fact. I am a plain Republican gentleman, a little proud

or perhaps I should say, conceited, on account of my old State, and still more so in respect of my native country; but I am not such an ass as to want to be a 'Lord.' Enough of that. What I have said, what I may yet say of myself will only be to explain my plan for you. Listen. Everage; I shall not claim your attention very long."

"I am listening, sir."

I am going to try to be reconciled to my poor wife. (My illness brought me to my senses on that subject also.) I am going to try to be reconciled to my wife; and then we are going to return to our native land. But before I do either—before I do anything—I shall make over the Killcrichtoun estate to *you*."

At this announcement the poor gentleman sprang to his feet, as if he had been shot from his chair; then, sinking back again, he covered his face with his hands and uttered such deep, heart-rending groans as could only be wrenched from a bosom wrung by remorse.

"Everage! Everage! my friend, what is the matter? Good Heavens! how nervous you are! How shattered your health must be! But you will recover your strength again when you leave this stifling atmosphere composed of smoke and fog, and get away to the bracing breezes of the Highlands!" said Alick, kindly.

"Too late! too late! too late!" moaned Everage.

"Too late? No, it isn't. You have no fatal malady. You are only broken down by hard work! You will recover in the Highlands. Think how your children will enjoy the freedom and fine air of the mountains. And you can take them to Killcrichtoun and enter on possession as soon as you like. The necessary deeds of conveyance of the land shall be made out as soon as I can get the slow lawyers to do it."

"It is too much! it is too much! Great Heaven! this is too much to bear! You overwhelm me, my lord!" groaned Everage.

"But why do you say so? Everage! look here! I really do think that you have more right—a great deal more right to the estate than I have. You and all your ancestors were British born. I and my immediate progenitors were American born. What right had I to come over here and claim this title and estate? None what-

ever in *right*, whatever I might have had in law. And I cannot continue to hold it and to transmit it to my son, unless I expatriate myself and become a British subject. And I will not do that. Therefore I do not *want* Killcrichtoun. A man is not even to be thanked for giving away what he don't want. As I said before, I shall make over the whole of the landed estate to *you*. I wish to Heaven I could also give you the title; but that cannot be so transferred, I believe; so the title must be dropped; for, of course, I cannot continue to bear it in my own country —it would make me simply ridiculous. When, however, you become the owner of Killcrichtoun, although you cannot be the baron, yet you will have the territorial title, according to the custom of Scotland. You will be called 'Killcrichtoun' or 'Everage of Killcrichtoun.' Come, come! cheer up, man!"

"Too much! it is too much! too much and too late!" groaned the poor gentleman, as he sat with his hands clasped tightly around his head, his bosom heaving and his eyes streaming with tears.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE PEACE-OFFERING.— *Continued.*

To Alick there seemed something awful in Everage's tremendous emotion. He had been a very handsome, fine-looking man, with that natural air of majesty and grace which not even the bitterness of poverty and servitude could take from him; but now he was all broken down.

Deep compassion moved the heart of Alick as he gazed on him.

"What is the matter, Everage?" he softly inquired.

"Coals of fire! Coals of fire!" answered the conscience-stricken man. And covering his bowed face with his hands, "he wept bitterly," as repentant Peter wept.

Alexander looked on with awe for an instant, and then turned away his head; he could not bear to see such abject grief.

At length, with an effort, Everage gained a mastery over his passion and raised his head, and with a look of

anguish still upon his face, and in a voice still vibrating with intense emotion, he said:

"You ask me what is the matter? Remorse is killing me! Remorse! and now your kindness!"

"'Remorse,' Everage?" exclaimed Alexander, in consternation.

"Yes, remorse! I am a criminal of the darkest dye! I am not worthy to live!"

"A criminal!—You!"

"Yes, I!—a God forsaken criminal."

"God never forsakes the greatest criminal, being penitent. But you, Everage! I cannot understand! I cannot believe you to be a criminal," answered Alexander, unable to recover from his consternation, and mentally running over the sins most likely to be committed by a poor gentleman under the influence of overpowering temptation. Was it embezzlement? swindling? No, he could have had no opportunity of dabbling in either of these. Was it forgery? Yes, it was most likely forgery. The poor usher had probably, under the pressure of terrible want, forged his employer's name to a check, or a note, or something of the sort, and was now dying of remorse and shame, and perhaps also of terror. And Alick resolved to help him, if help were possible.

"Everage," he asked kindly, "do you wish to confide in me?"

"I wish to CONFESS to you, since the offense was committed against you," groaned the heart-broken man.

"Against *me?*" exclaimed Alexander, in a tone of surprise that was not without pleasure; for he instantly thought—"Oh, if he has only forged *my* name to a cheque or a note, or anything of the sort, it will be perfectly easy to save him. It will only be for me to take up the paper without saying anything about it; or, at worst, to acknowledge the signature." Then, speaking softly, he said:

"Tell me everything, Everage, freely as one sinner speaking to another; for I, too, have sinned too deeply to have any sort of right to judge harshly. Speak freely, Everage."

Still for a moment the poor gentleman remained silent. He knew that, after having told all, his bosom would

feel somewhat relieved, yet he could scarcely bring himself to utter his own shame.

"I will tell you everything. And the more willingly because reparation is still in my power."

"But, Everage, if such reparation should in any way distress you, it need not be made. Nay, if the confession itself will distress you, withhold it, my friend. If, as you say, the offense is against me, you need not tell it; and believe me, neither you nor any one else shall ever hear of it," said Alick, kindly.

"Every gentle, generous word you speak stabs my heart like a reproach. I must tell you all. It will shame me, but it will relieve me to do so. Reparation must be made; and it will not distress but comfort me to make it; nay, it will almost do away my guilt. It is a measure that I had already resolved upon. I was only waiting for my poor wife to get over her impending *accouchement* before carrying it into effect; for in my poor Belle's present critical condition, the excitement of a criminal trial would surely kill her. And thus my little girls would be bereft of both parents."

"Everage, you talk wildly! If the offense is against me, it is already condoned. You may reveal it or not as you please. For myself, I do not see the need of your doing so."

"That is because you do not know the nature of my crime! Lord Killcrichtoun, it was I who caused your child to be abducted!—There! kill me where I stand if you like! No one will think of blaming you," said Everage, in a broken voice, as he tottered to his feet and stood before little Lenny's father.

But Alexander gazed at him in amazement and incredulity for a full minute before he found ideas or words to reply. Then he exclaimed:

"Everage, you are mad to think so! What motive could you possibly have had for getting possession of my child? You who have so many of your own? I say you are mad to think it."

"No," said Everage, dropping back in his chair and covering his face. "No, not mad *now:* but I was mad then, when I caused the child to be carried off! I was mad, blind, and Heaven-forsaken!"

"Not Heaven-forsaken, Everage, or you would not have been brought to this confession. But is this really true? You caused the child to be carried off? You said the reparation was still in your power!—*that* means the child still lives! Where is he? Is he in London? Is he in our reach? Is he well?" inquired Alexander, scarcely able to control the violence of his emotions—his strangely mingled and warring emotions—of astonishment, indignation, ecstasy and impatience.

"Yes, to all your questions," answered Everage, dropping his face into his hands.

"But, good Heaven, what *possible* motive *could* you have had for carrying off my child? You *must* have been mad!"

"I was! I was, my lord! mad and blind and God-forsaken! I was tempted beyond——"

"Stop, Everage! don't tell me just now. I must see my boy immediately. Can you take me to him now?"

"Yes," answered the poor gentleman, in an almost inaudible voice.

"How far is it?" asked Alexander, with his hand upon the bell.

"About two miles from here," breathed Everage.

"Then we must have a carriage," observed Alexander, ringing the bell.

"A cab, immediately!" he said, as the waiter appeared.

"And now, Everage," he continued, when they were left alone together again, "now tell me what could possibly have caused you to have my child carried off. Do you know his loss has nearly broken his mother's heart?"

"Do I *not* know it? Have I not felt it? felt it day and night since the devil deluded me into doing this deed? Lord Killcrichtoun, look at me! See the wreck remorse has made of me! No sooner had I done this deed than remorse, like a consuming fire, than which the fires of Hell cannot be fiercer, entered my heart and burned my life away to this."

"Burned your guilt away, Everage, but not your life."

"This agony of remorse I would not have borne for a week, but for my wife's critical condition."

"But she must have been very much distressed by the change in you."

"She was; but she ascribed it all to overwork in the school. And I soothed her by saying that after her confinement I should leave the school. I did not tell her, *for the Old Bailey*."

"Hush, Everage, there will be nothing of that sort. But you have not yet told me what it was that tempted you to load thus your conscience."

"I will tell you all—I will keep nothing back, and then you can do as you please."

But, before he could say another word, the waiter opened the door, and announced the cab that had been ordered.

Alexander and Everage left the house, Everage tottering with weakness and scarcely able to walk without the support of Alexander's arm, which was readily given him.

Everage gave the order.

"Black street, Blackfriars' Road."

And then, with the help of Alexander, entered the cab.

When they were both seated and the vehicle was in motion, Everage commenced the story of little Lenny's abduction, and the causes that led to the act.

With a shame-bowed head, in a broken and almost inaudible voice, he spoke of the bitterness of his poverty and his servitude; of the love, which was agony, for his beautiful, pale-faced wife, and lovely, fading little girls; of the jealousy with which he saw the Killcrichtoun estate, that might have been his own, and the salvation of his famishing family, pass away to a foreigner, so wealthy that he cared nothing for the half-sterile Highland acres; of his belief that the present baron's life was so precarious that in a very short time no one but little Lenny would stand between himself and the inheritance of Killcrichtoun; and of the intensity of the temptation that finally maddened and conquered him, and drew him on to crime; and finally, again he spoke of the fierce remorse that like the fires of Tophet devoured his life.

"And now," he concluded, "do with me what you will! I have nothing to say in my defense, nothing whatever! You can prosecute me for the abduction. You can send me to penal servitude for Heaven knows how many years! It will be just! I only entreat you, in any case, not to let my innocent family starve!"

"My poor Everage! I could not look in your face and see the wreck remorse has made of you, and raise my hand or voice against you! 'Penal servitude!' Your whole life has been penal servitude! Besides, besides, in my more favored position, without any of the temptations that beset you, I myself have been too great a sinner to dare to be a harsh judge! In your position, Everage, heaven knows, I might have been tempted to do the same things!" said Alexander, gravely.

"But I never meant to harm the child. I would have taken the best care of him I could."

"I believe you, Everage. And let me find the child alive and well, and let me have the happiness of laying him upon his mother's lap; and then let the whole matter pass into forgetfulness. It shall not in any way interfere with my plans for your welfare."

"God bless you, sir!" wept the poor gentleman; "God, in his great mercy, bless you!"

"Black street, sir," said the cabman, pulling up his horses and waiting further orders.

"Turn into it and drive on until you reach Bushe Lane. It is on the left hand," answered Everage.

The cabman turned his horses' heads and drove down the street for some distance and then pulled up again.

"Bushe's Lane, sir."

"Turn into it and go on until you reach Blood Alley. It is also on the left side," said Everage.

The cabman turned into the dark, unwholesome lane and drove on for a short distance and then reined up his horses again.

"Blood Alley, sir," he said.

"We must get out here, the alley is too narrow to admit the passage of the carriage," said Everage opening the door.

And both men stepped down at the entrance of the foul alley, dark, loathsome and offensive to every material sense and moral sentiment.

"Wait here until we return," said Everage to the cabman.

The man touched his hat in assent as he thought to himself:

"Them two coves be two detectives on the scent of thieves."

Everage led the way and Alexander followed him, picking his steps as well as he could through the fermenting filth of the alley, and shuddering to think his child was exposed to such deadly air.

About midway down the alley Everage paused before a tall, tottering tenement house, occupied by the lowest caste of thieves and beggars.

"Here is the place," he said, opening the door and entering the passage-way without either obstruction or even observation; for at this hour the tenants were out upon their tramps.

Everage led the way up several flights of quaking stairs to the attic floor, which certainly, from its height, had the advantage of a purer air.

Everage opened a door immediately in front of the landing and signed Alexander to enter.

Alick passed the threshold and found himself in a room with a sloping roof and a skylight.

The room was clearer than when he saw it last, for Meg had been supplied with soap, and had kept it so for little Lenny's sake; but it was almost as bare of furniture as before.

There were but two persons present—a wild-looking, dark-haired, bare-footed girl walking the floor: and a child in her arms—a pale, wan baby-boy, with his fair-haired head dropped heavily upon her shoulder, his violet eyes closed, and his long fringed eyelids lying down upon his dead white cheeks. His little clothes were old and faded and patched, but as clean as hands could make them.

As the two men entered the room the girl looked up, pointed to the sleeping child and signed them to be quiet.

It was too late. Poor little Lenny had become a nervous and irritable sleeper. The slightest noise would awaken him. And now the sound of approaching footsteps startled him from his sleep, and he awoke with a shiver. His first words were:

"Doosa tome, Met?"

Then looking up and seeing only two men, he dropped his head upon Meg's shoulder and wailed forth his disappointment:

"Doosa not tome! Doosa not tome! Lenny want see Doosa! Lenny want to see Doosa so bad!"

"And you shall see Doosa, my darling boy! You shall see Doosa before the sun goes down. You shall sleep on your mother's bosom to-night, little Lenny!" exclaimed Alexander, in great agitation, as he went to the child and held out his arms.

But Lenny turned away and clasped his own arms around Meg's neck and renewed his plaintive cry:

"I want to see Doosa! I want to see Doosa so bad! I don't want anybody esse!"

"And so you shall see Doosa, my beloved boy. Look at me, little Lenny! don't you know me?" coaxed Alexander.

"Ess, I do! But I want see Doosa!"

"Look at me, my darling! Come to me! I will take you to Doosa directly!" pleaded Alexander, holding out his arms and gazing earnestly in the face of his son.

Now little Lenny had been deceived by fair but false promises, and his faith was failing. But there was an earnest truthfulness in the looks and words of the man that now carried conviction to the heart of the child. His face lightened, beamed, became transfigured with ecstasy:

"You tate me see Doosa? You tate me now?" he joyously exclaimed.

"Yes, my darling, now this moment! Come to me," said Alexander, still holding out his arms.

Lenny bounded into them.

"Oh, sir! you will not take him from me! It would break my heart! he is all I have to love in the world, all that loves me! I would work my fingers to the bones, I would for him! Please, sir, don't take him away!" cried Meg, lifting the corner of her apron to her eyes.

"I must take him to his mother, my girl. She too is pining for him," said Alexander, kindly.

"Oh, Lenny, you won't leave me! You won't leave poor Met?" she wept, appealing to the child.

"No! no! no!" said Master Leonard, peremptorily. "*Not* leave Met! Met go too! Met go too! Met go too!"

"But, my darling, Met can't go!"

"I will, I will, I will! Lenny love Met! Lenny not leave Met. Met go too!"

"But, Met cannot go," remonstrated the father.

"Oh, yes, sir, I can," sobbed Meg. "If you will take

him, I can go, if you will let me; and I will be a faithful servant to him all my life, and never want any wages."

"Met go too! Met go too!" sang out little Lenny. It was the chorus of the song.

"But, my girl, how can you go? I would willingly reward you for the care you must have bestowed upon my child, who, but for you, might have perished in this horrible place, but how can I take you away? you have parents or guardians who must be consulted."

Meg left off crying, and laughed aloud;

"No, sir; little ladies and gentlemen have them things, not the likes of us! The people I live with ain't no kin to me, though I do call the men uncle, and the woman grannam; I am only their drudge, sir; I am free to go with the child, if you will let me."

"Met go too! Met go too!" cried the little despot, beginning now to scream and kick with impatience.

He had not been used to have his will crossed. He had been accustomed to prompt obedience from his white slaves.

"I see that you are 'a chip of the old block,'" smiled Alexander.

"Met go too! Met go too!" screamed the young tyrant, making his feet fly with such velocity that they looked like a drove of feet.

Meanwhile, Meg, with her apron to her eyes, was sobbing violently. A scene was certainly impending.

"I think, sir, if I were you I would take the girl along. I think well of her. I believe her account of herself to be true. And I believe it would be a good work to take her from this haunt of sin and misery—alas! I beg your pardon, I had forgotten myself, I have no right to preach," said the poor penitent, bowing his head.

"I will take her at your word, Everage; but, good Heaven, look down at her feet!"

"Well, they are not cloven!" said the poor gentleman, with a sad attempt at a pleasantry. "Give her a sovereign sir, and let her run out and fit herself with a bonnet, and shawl, and a pair of shoes and stockings. I'll warrant she'll do it all in twenty minutes."

"I'll do it in less time, sir; indeed I will, if you'll only let me go with little Lenny!"

"Very well; be quick," said Alexander, handing over a sovereign.

"Oh, please, sir, give it to me in smaller change. If the shopkeeper was to see the likes of me with a whole suvring at a time, they would stop it, and send for the police," said Meg.

"That is quite likely," thought Alick, as he replaced the offered coin in his purse, and then gave her a half sovereign in gold, and a half in silver change.

Meg was as quick as her word. She hurried out, and, in fifteen minutes hurried in, equipped for her ride. It was in less time than they supposed she could have effected her purchases.

Then she took Lenny in her arms, and prepared to follow the two gentlemen.

The whole party went down Blood Alley towards its outlet upon Bushe Lane.

Little Lenny laughed and patted Meg's cheeks, and prattled all the way.

"Going to see Doosa, Met! Met going to see Doosa too!" Lenny love Met! Lenny not leave Met! Met going to see Doosa!"

When they reached Bushe Lane, where the cab was waiting, the astute cabman, looking around upon the party, said to himself:

"There—I knew it! They've caught one on 'em; and what a young sinner to be the mother of a child that big!"

Everage put Meg and Lenny into the cab, and then followed with Alexander.

Lenny was still full of joyous babble.

"Wide in cawidge, Met! Met wide in cawidge too!" he kept saying, as he patted her cheeks and kissed her.

"They should never be separated," murmured the poor gentleman, timidly, as if speaking to himself.

"They shall not be, if I can help it," replied Alexander who had read with approval the letter of recommendation contained in Meg's face.

They drove rapidly up Bushe Lane, through Black street, and up Blackfriars' road. But little conversation was carried on until they reached the Strand.

When drawing near to Wellington street, where Everage lived, he said.

But you will not take the child to his mother this afternoon?"

"Certainly," replied Alexander.

"What—now, immediately?"

"Yes."

"Will not the shock be too great?"

"No; I have heard that she is almost morbid on the subject, and is constantly looking for the child, and expecting to find him, or to have him brought home to her. I also had a sort of conviction that I should have the happiness of finding him and carrying him as a peace-offering to his mother. It was a very remarkable presentiment, I think."

"Presentiments when believed in, often fulfil themselves," said Everage.

"However that may be, I so firmly believed that I should find the child, that I instructed his mother's friends to encourage her hopes and keep up her expectations of seeing him, so that when I should bring him to her, she should not sustain a fatal shock of joy."

By this time they had reached Wellington street, and at the request of Everage the cab was drawn up.

The poor gentleman got out.

"Give me your hand, Everage," said Alexander; and holding it, he added, "I shall see you very soon, and remember, you are to have that Highland property."

Everage pressed the hand of his magnanimous friend with a look more eloquent than words, and then turned and walked rapidly up Wellington street.

"Drive on," said Alexander.

"Where now, sir?" inquired the cabman, touching his hat.

"Morley House, Trafalgar square."

In a very few minutes the cab drove up to the hotel and stopped.

One of the servants of the house, seeing Lord Killcrichtoun's face at the window, came out to him.

"Do you know if Mr. Hammond is in the house just now?" inquired Alexander.

"Yes, sir; he is in the reading-room."

"Take in my card and ask him if he will do me the favor to come out."

The waiter vanished, and Dick soon made his appearance at the cab door.

"Oh, Dick! I have found him!" exclaimed Alick, pointing to the child.

"Little Lenny! Thank God!" cried Dick, jerking open the door, jumping into the cab, and seizing little Lenny and seating himself.

"Oh, Dit! Dit! Lenny tome home see Doosa! Met tome too! Lenny wide in tab! Met wide too! Lenny not leave Met! Lenny love Met!"

And so the child prattled on, patting Dick's cheeks, and pulling his whiskers, and kissing him.

"Oh, I am so glad! Where did you find him, Alick? How was it? Tell me all about it!"

"Too long a story, Dick. I must take him to his mother. Can I do so with safety?"

"I think so. I have constantly encouraged her hopes of finding the child; and yet perhaps it would be well to be cautious. I will just step up and prepare her a little. I will tell her that we have better hopes than ever of finding her child; and that we have heard from him, and know where he is; and that he is now on his way to her, and so forth. But I will not tell her that *you* are bringing him. I will leave that delight to yourself."

"Thank you, Dick. Make haste, and don't be gone a moment longer than necessary."

"I will come back as soon as possible," said Dick as he disappeared.

"See Doosa! see Doosa!" exclaimed little Lenny impatiently.

"Yes, my boy, you shall see Doosa, Dick has gone to look for Doosa and tell her," said Alexander.

"Dit done look for Doosa?"

"Yes, my darling."

So Lenny prattled on.

Dick was gone rather longer than was expected, but at length he returned.

"You can go to her now. I have led her to expect that a gentleman from Jersey has found the child, and is on his way home with him, and that he may arrive by any train now. The news has made her very happy, as you may judge. And now you may go up to her. She is alone in her chamber."

"Thanks, Dick! many thanks for your kindness. Come, Meg," said Alick, stepping out upon the sidewalk.

Meg followed with little Lenny in her arms.

"You must come and show me her room, Dick," said Alick.

"Certainly," replied Hammond.

The whole party entered the house and passed upstairs.

When they arrived at the door of Drusilla's chamber, Alick took little Lenny in his arms and said:

"I must enter alone. Dick, be so good as to take this girl to your wife and tell her that she is to be an under nurse-maid or something of the sort. After I have seen Drusilla we will attend to the girl's case."

"Very well, Alick. Heaven speed you," said Dick, beckoning to Meg, who followed him meekly, and moving towards Anna's room.

"Where Met gone? where Met gone?" impatiently demanded Lenny.

"Met has gone to see Anna," answered Alexander.

"Met tome back soon?"

"Yes, she will come back soon."

"Met go see Doosa too?"

"Yes, Met go see Doosa too. Now, Lenny, be a good, *quiet* boy. We are going to see Doosa."

"Lenny be good boy den."

"And mind, you must be very, very still. You must not jump and kick and scream; if you do you will hurt Doosa," said Alexander, looking very gravely into the child's face.

"Lenny be good boy! Lenny not hurt Doosa," answerd the child with owlet-like solemnity.

Still Alick paused at the door. How many minutes he paused before he could sufficiently compose himself for the joyous trial before him. But then he had not yet recovered from the effects of his wound.

At length, with a prayer in his heart, he opened the door so softly as not to disturb the inmate of the room.

She was sitting at the window, with her elbow resting on its sill, and her head bowed upon her hand. How worn and wan she looked! Her face was scarcely less white than the snowy robe she wore. Her face was

turned partly towards the window, and had an anxious, listening look, as if constantly watching for the coming of some beloved and long-expected one.

As soon as little Lenny saw his mother, he forgot all his promises, and sang out with all the strength of his baby lungs:

"Doosa! Doosa! See Lenny tome home!"

She turned her head quickly, screamed, and started up to meet him; but overwhelmed with emotion, sank back again into her chair and gasped for breath.

"Hush, hush, my boy; see you have hurt Doosa; be very good now!" whispered Alexander in a tone that awed the child into silence.

Then he crossed the room, knelt at her feet, and said:

"My wife, I have no word to say for myself. Let our child plead for me."

And he laid little Lenny on her lap.

"No, there was no scene that could be fully reported here.

Husband and child, both restored to her in an instant! It is a wonder she had not died then and there! But she did not even faint. Heaven, that had sustained her through such long-drawn-out, unutterable sorrows, gave her strength now to meet the sudden shock of joy.

She gently put little Lenny aside for a moment, where the child, still awed into silence, stood quietly.

She stooped and fell upon her Alick's neck and clasped him to her; she wept over him in ecstasy; she kissed him again and again, sobbing words of the fondest endearment—sacred words not to be written here.

Lenny looked on in wonder and awe for some time; but at last his impatience overcame every other emotion, and he sang out:

"Me, too! Me, too! Me, too! 'Top it, Doosa! Tate Lenny up!"

Alick, with a face radiant with joy, once more snatched up the child, and kissed him rapturously, and put him in his mother's arms, saying:

"Tell him who I am, darling wife! Tell him who I am!"

"Does he not know?" inquired Drusilla, who was covering her child with caresses.

"No. I never felt that I had any right to tell him."

"Lenny, love, do you know who that gentleman is?" she asked, looking fondly at the child and then at the father.

"Ess I do! he bring Lenny home to Doosa," answered the boy.

"Look at him, Lenny. He is your papa."

"Lenny's popper?" inquired the baby looking with great eyes at the stranger, who had now taken on a new interest for him.

"Yes," softly answered his mother.

"Lenny dot popper *too?*"

At this innocent question, in which so much was expressed, Alexander, again conscience-stricken, turned away his head to hide the tears that rushed to his eyes.

But for all reply, Drusilla stooped and kissed her child and handed him back to his father.

The reconciliation was perfect.

Later, they went into the drawing-room, to which Dick brought Anna and General Lyon all of whom, amid tears and caresses, offered their earnest congratulations to the reunited pair; and rejoiced with an exceeding great joy over the restoration of little Lenny.

But all this was nothing to the frantic delight of Pina when she heard little Lenny had been found. She ran to him, she snatched him up, kissed him and hugged him, and laughed and cried over him to such a degree that even Master Leonard, who could bear a great deal of that sort of thing, was obliged to order her to——

"'Top it."

And then she ceased, and bore him off to dress him in all his finery for dinner.

"Yes, the reconciliation was perfect. And as it very seldom happens that any human being suffers as Drusilla had suffered, so, also, it falls to the lot of very few to be so happy as she was that evening and ever thereafter.

She never learned the true history of little Lenny's abduction. She was left to believe in the policeman's theory that the child had been stolen by thieves for the sake of the jewelry on his person. She was told, however, of Meg's cherishing care of her baby, and she saw for herself the strong attachment existing between them;

and so she appointed Meg under nurse-maid, and fitted her out with a decent wardrobe. As to Meg's "parents and guardians," the thieves of Blood Alley, they were left to their own conjectures on the subject of her absence, and they probably came to just conclusions, and being in possession of their ill-got money, were also probably satisfied.

What else?

Clarence Everage, the sincerely repentant sinner whom misery had tempted to crime for which nature had never intended him, and whom conscience had afterwards constrained to confession and restitution—Clarence Everage, the poor, proud gentleman, the oppressed public school drudge—was put in possession of the Highland estate, and he became Everage of Killcrichtoun.

Alexander advanced the funds to make the house habitable and the land arable.

In the bracing air of the mountains his fading wife, and pale little daughters grew rosy and happy, well and strong. Everage also recovered his health and good looks, but never regained the raven hues of his hair. And when his wife or any friend would suggest that it was perfectly proper so young a man—so prematurely gray—should dye his hair, he would shake his head with a melancholy smile and say:

"No, no! I wear my gray locks in memory of a great temptation and a great fault, that might have been a fatal one but for the Lord's goodness."

No one, not even his wife, knew what he meant. And no one ventured to ask him. They saw that the matter was a sacred confidence between himself and his Creator, with which none might intermeddle.

In truth, nobody ever knew all the circumstances of little Lenny's abduction except those immediately concerned in it. Alexander had been generous in his recovered happiness, and had spared the name and fame of the poor gentleman.

The Lyon family, of which little Lenny was the greatest lion of all, did not immediately return to their own country. They made the tour of Europe, and worked hard at it, and so they saw about one trillionth part of what was worth seeing.

They were accompanied by the Seymours and by Francis Tredegar.

At the end of a year they went back to America, and down into Virginia.

Soon after their arrival several important family events occurred.

First, Drusilla presented little Lenny with a little sister, who was named Annette, and who became his especial delight.

Next, Anna became the mother of a fine boy, to the direct controverting of the gipsy fortune-teller's prediction, which had promised her only girls.

And finally, Nanny Seymour and Francis Tredegar were married; and the young couple, after a prolonged bridal tour, took up their abode with Colonel and Mrs. Seymour.

Pina made Jacob inexpressibly happy by accepting the dusky hand and honest heart of that "gorilla." Her place being made vacant by her marriage was well filled by Meg, now grown to be a pretty civilized-looking young woman, and promoted to be head of the nursery at Crew Wood.

When I last heard of these friends of ours, General Lyon was still living, in the enjoyment of a hale and happy age, at Old Lyon Hall, surrounded by Anna and Dick and their children, who made their home with him And Hammond Hall was kept in good order by a steward and a housekeeper. And in the fishing season, the family, with a party of friends, usually occupy it for a few weeks. And there, as well as at Old Lyon Hall, they are often joined by Alexander and Drusilla.

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Their other country seat, Cedar Wood Cottage, is still in the care of "Mammy" and her "old man." And every winter Alick and Drusilla, with their children, go there to be near Washington in the season. And Mr. and Mrs. Hammond and General Lyon come to them. The old General never loses his interest in what is going on at the capital.

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